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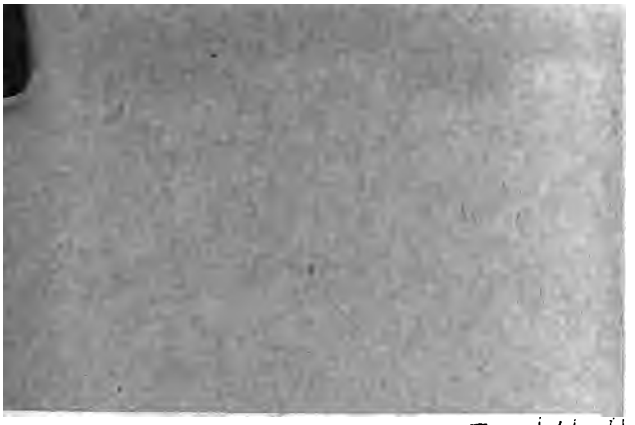

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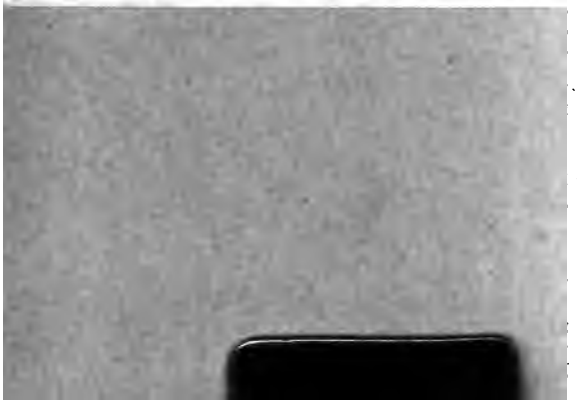

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THE

WORKS

OF

HENRY FIELDING, Esq.

WITH

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

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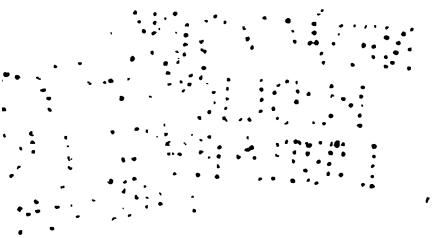

AMELIA.

Felices ter, & amplius,
Quos irrupta tenet copula.

Γυναικὸς ἥδὺν χρῆμ' ἀνὴρ λαίζεται
Εσθλῆς ἄμεινον, ἢ δὲ μὴ γαμεῖν κακή.

TO

RALPH ALLEN, Esq.

SIR,

THE following book is sincerely designed to promote the cause of virtue, and to expose some of the most glaring evils, as well public as private, which at present infest the country; though there is scarce, as I remember, a single stroke of satire aimed at any one person throughout the whole.

The best man is the propereſt patron of such an attempt. This, I believe, will be readily granted; nor will the public voice, I think, be more divided, to whom they will give that appellation. Should a letter, indeed, be thus inscribed, DETUR OPTIMO, there are few persons who would think it wanted any other direction.

I will not trouble you with a preface concerning the work; nor endeavour to

obviate any criticiſms which can be made on it. The good-natured reader, if his heart ſhould be here affected, will be inclined to pardon many faults for the pleaſure he will receive from a tender ſenſation; and for readers of a different ſtamp, the more faults they can diſcover, the more, I am convinced, they will be pleaſed.

Nor will I aſſume the fulſome ſtile of common dedicators. I have not their uſual deſign in this epiſtle; nor will I borrow their language. Long, very long, may it be, before a moſt dreadful circumſtance ſhall make it poſſible for any pen to draw a juſt and true character of yourſelf, without incurring a ſuſpicion of flattery in the boſoms of the malignant. This taſk, therefore, I ſhall defer till that day (if I ſhould be ſo unfortunate as ever to ſee it) when every good man ſhall pay a tear for the ſatisfaction of his curioſity—a day which at preſent, I believe, there is but one good man in the

the world who can think of it with unconcern.

Accept, then, Sir, this ſmall token of that love, that gratitude, and that reſpect with which I ſhall always eſteem it my GREATEST HONOUR to be,

SIR,

Your moſt obliged,

And moſt obedient

Humble Servant,

Bow Street,
Dec. 2, 1751.

Henry Fielding.

CON-

CONTENTS

OF THE

TENTH VOLUME.

BOOK I.

Containing the history of Amelia.

CHAP. I. *THE exordium*, &c. Page 1

CHAP. II. *The history sets out. Observations on the excellency of the* English *constitution, and curious examinations before a justice of peace.* p. 2

CHAP. III. *Containing the inside of a prison.* p. 9

CHAP. IV. *Discloſing further ſecrets of the priſon-houſe.* p. 14

CHAP. V. *Containing certain adventures which befel Mr.* Booth *in the priſon.* p. 19

CHAP. VI. *Containing the extraordinary behaviour of Miſs* Matthews *on her meeting with* Booth, *and ſome endeavours to prove by reaſon and authority, that it is poſſible for a woman to appear to be what ſhe really is not.* p. 23

CHAP. VII. *In which Miſs* Matthews *begins her hiſtory.* p. 28

CHAP. VIII. *The hiſtory of Miſs* Matthews *continued.* p. 33

CHAP. IX. *In which Miſs* Matthews *concludes her relation.* p. 38

CHAP. X. *Table talk, conſiſting of a facetious diſcourſe that paſſed in the priſon.* p. 46

BOOK II.

CHAP. I. *In which Captain* Booth *begins to relate his hiſtory.* p. 52

CHAP. II. *Mr.* Booth *continues his ſtory. In this chapter there are ſome paſſages that may ſerve as a kind of touchſtone, by which a young lady may examine the heart of her lover. I would adviſe, therefore, that every*

lover

lover be obliged to read it over in the preſence of his miſtreſs, and that ſhe carefully watch his emotions while he is reading. Page 56

CHAP. III. *The narrative continued. More of the touch-ſtone.* p. 61

CHAP. IV. *The ſtory of Mr.* Booth *continued: In this chapter the reader will perceive a glimpſe of the character of a very good divine; with ſome matters of a very tender kind.* p. 65

CHAP. V. *Containing ſtrange revolutions of fortune.* p. 69

CHAP. VI. *Containing many ſurpriſing adventures.* p. 72

CHAP. VII. *The ſtory of* Booth *continued. More ſurpriſing adventures.* p. 78

CHAP. VIII. *In which our readers will probably be divided in their opinion of Mr.* Booth's *conduct.* p. 83

CHAP. IX. *Containing a ſcene of a different kind from any of the preceding.* p. 87

BOOK III.

CHAP. I. *In which Mr.* Booth *reſumes his ſtory.* p. 94

CHAP. II. *Containing a ſcene of the tender kind.* p. 96

CHAP. III. *In which Mr.* Booth *ſets forward on his journey.* p. 102

CHAP. IV. *A ſea-piece.* p. 105

CHAP. V. *The arrival of* Booth *at* Gibraltar, *with what there befel him.* p. 111

CHAP. VI. *Containing matters which will pleaſe ſome readers.* p. 114

CHAP. VII. *The captain, continuing his ſtory, recounts ſome particulars, which we doubt not, to many good people, will appear unnatural.* p. 118

CHAP. VIII. *The ſtory of* Booth *continued.* p. 124

CHAP. IX. *Containing very extraordinary matters.* p. 132

CHAP. X. *Containing a letter of a very curious kind.* p. 137

CHAP. XI. *In which Mr.* Booth *relates his return to* England. p. 142

CHAP. XII. *In which Mr.* Booth *concludes his ſtory.* p. 147

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I. *Containing very myſterious matter.* p. 154

CHAP. II. *The latter part of which we expect will pleaſe our reader better than the former.* p. 157

CHAP.

CHAP. III. *Containing wise observations of the author, and other matters.* Page 165
CHAP. IV. *In which* Amelia *appears in no unamiable light.* p. 172
CHAP. V. *Containing an eulogium upon innocence, and other grave matters.* p. 175
CHAP. VI. *In which may appear that violence is sometimes done to the name of love.* p. 182
CHAP. VII. *Containing a very extraordinary and pleasant incident.* p. 188
CHAP. VIII. *Containing various matters.* p. 192
CHAP. IX. *In which* Amelia, *with her friend, goes to the oratorio.* p. 196

BOOK V.

CHAP. I. *In which the reader will meet with an old acquaintance.* p. 203
CHAP. II. *In which* Booth *pays a visit to the noble lord* p. 206
CHAP. III. *Relating principally to the affairs of Serjeant* Atkinson. p. 210
CHAP. IV. *Containing matters that require no preface.* p. 215
CHAP. V. *Containing much heroic matter.* p. 220
CHAP. VI. *In which the reader will find matter worthy his consideration.* p. 224
CHAP. VII. *Containing various matters.* p. 230
CHAP. VIII. *The heroic behaviour of Colonel* Bath. p. 236
CHAP. IX. *Being the last chapter of the fifth book.* p. 241

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I. *Panegyric on beauty, with other grave matters.* p. 246
CHAP. II. *Which will not appear, we presume, unnatural to all married readers.* p. 251
CHAP. III. *In which the history looks a little backwards.* p. 255
CHAP. IV. *Containing a very extraordinary incident.* p. 261
CHAP. V. *Containing some matters not very unnatural.* p. 266

CHAP. VI. *A ſcene, in which ſome ladies will poſſibly think* Amelia's *conduct exceptionable.* Page 270
CHAP. VII. *A chapter in which there is much learning.* p. 275
CHAP. VIII. *Containing ſome unaccountable behaviour in Mrs* Elliſon. p. 280
CHAP. IX. *Containing a very ſtrange incident.* p. 285

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I. *A very ſhort chapter, and conſequently requiring no preface.* p. 289
CHAP. II. *The beginning of Mrs.* Bennet's *hiſtory.* p. 291
CHAP. III. *Continuation of Mrs.* Bennet's *ſtory.* p. 299
CHAP. IV. *Further Continuation.* p. 305
CHAP. V. *The ſtory of Mrs.* Bennet *continued.* p. 310
CHAP. VI. *Further continuation.* p. 318
CHAP. VII. *The ſtory further continued.* p. 325
CHAP. VIII. *Further continuation.* p. 328
CHAP. IX. *The concluſion of Mrs.* Bennet's *hiſtory.* p. 333
CHAP. X. *Being the laſt chapter of the ſeventh book.* p. 337

AMELIA.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

Containing the Exordium, &c.

THE various accidents which befel a very worthy couple, after their uniting in the ſtate of matrimony, will be the ſubject of the following hiſtory. The diſtreſſes which they waded through, were ſome of them ſo exquiſite, and the incidents which produced theſe ſo extraordinary, that they ſeemed to require not only the utmoſt malice, but the utmoſt invention which ſuperſtition hath ever attributed to Fortune: though whether any ſuch being interfered in the caſe, or, indeed, whether there be any ſuch being in the univerſe, is a matter which I by no means preſume to determine in the affirmative. To ſpeak a bold truth, I am, after much mature deliberation, inclined to ſuſpect, that the public voice hath, in all ages, done much injuſtice to Fortune, and hath convicted her of many facts in which ſhe had not the leaſt concern. I queſtion much, whether we may not, by natural means, account for the ſucceſs of knaves, the calamities of fools, with all the miſeries in which men of ſenſe ſometimes involve themſelves by quitting the directions of prudence, and following the blind guidance of a predominant paſſion; in ſhort, for all the ordinary Phenomena which are imputed to Fortune; whom, perhaps, men accuſe with no leſs abſurdity in life, than a bad player complains of ill luck at the game of cheſs.

But if men are ſometimes guilty of laying improper blame on this imaginary being, they are altogether as apt to make her amends, by aſcribing to her honours which ſhe as little deſerves. To retrieve the ill conſequences of a fooliſh conduct, and by ſtruggling manfully with diſtreſs to ſubdue it, is one of the nobleſt efforts of wiſdom and virtue. Whoever, therefore, calls ſuch a man fortunate, is guilty of no leſs impropriety in ſpeech, than he would be, who ſhould call the ſtatuary or the poet fortunate, who carved a Venus, or who writ an Iliad.

Life may as properly be called an art as any other; and the great incidents in it are no more to be conſidered as mere accidents, than the ſeveral members of a fine ſtatue, or a noble poem. The critics in all theſe are not content with ſeeing any thing to be great, without knowing why and how it came to be ſo. By examining carefully the ſeveral gradations which conduce to bring every model to perfection, we learn truly to know that ſcience in which the model is formed: as hiſtories of this kind, therefore, may properly be called models of HUMAN LIFE; ſo by obſerving minutely the ſeveral incidents which tend to the cataſtrophe or completion of the whole, and the minute cauſes whence thoſe incidents are produced, we ſhall beſt be inſtructed in this moſt uſeful of all arts, which I call the ART of LIFE.

CHAP II.

The hiſtory ſets out. Obſervations on the excellency of the Engliſh conſtitution, and curious examinations before a juſtice of peace.

ON the firſt of April, in the year ——, the watchmen of a certain pariſh (I know not particularly which), within the liberty of Weſtminſter, brought ſeveral perſons whom they had apprehended the preceding night, before Jonathan Thraſher, Eſq. one of the juſtices of the peace for that liberty.

But here, reader, before we proceed to the tryals of theſe offenders, we ſhall, after our uſual manner, premiſe ſome things which it may be neceſſary for thee to know.

It hath been obſerved, I think, by many, as well as the celebrated writer of three letters, that no human inſtitution is capable of conſummate perfection. An obſervation which, perhaps, that writer at leaſt gathered from diſcovering ſome defects in the polity even of this well regulated nation. And, indeed, if there ſhould be any ſuch defect in a conſtitution which my Lord Coke long ago told us, 'the wiſdom of all the wiſe men in 'the world, if they had all met together at one 'time, could not have equalled;' which ſome of our wiſeſt men who were met together long before, ſaid, was too good to be altered in any particular; and which, nevertheleſs, hath been mending ever ſince, by a very great number of the ſaid wiſe men: if, I ſay, this conſtitution ſhould be imperfect, we may be allowed, I think, to doubt whether any ſuch faultleſs model can be found among the inſtitutions of men.

It will probably be objected, that the ſmall imperfections which I am about to produce, do not lie in the laws themſelves, but in the ill execution of them; but, with ſubmiſſion, this appears to me to be no leſs an abſurdity, than to ſay of any machine that it is excellently made, though incapable of performing its functions. Good laws ſhould execute themſelves in a well regulated ſtate; at leaſt, if the ſame legiſlature which provides the laws, doth not provide for the execution of them, they act as Graham would do, if he ſhould form all the parts of a clock in the moſt exquiſite manner, yet put them ſo together that the clock could not go. In this caſe, ſurely we might ſay that there was a ſmall defect in the conſtitution of the clock.

To ſay the truth, Graham would ſoon ſee the fault, and would eaſily remedy it. The fault indeed could be no other than that the parts were improperly diſpoſed.

Perhaps, reader, I have another illuſtration, which will ſet my intention in ſtill a clearer light before you. Figure to yourſelf then a family, the maſter of which ſhould diſpoſe of the ſeveral œconomical offices in the following manner; viz. ſhould put his butler in the coach-box, his ſteward behind his coach, his coachman in the butlery, and his footman in the ſtewardſhip, and in the ſame ridiculous manner ſhould miſ-employ the talents of every other ſervant; it is eaſy to ſee what a figure ſuch a family muſt make in the world.

As ridiculous as this may ſeem, I have often conſidered ſome of the lower offices in our civil government to be diſpoſed in this very manner. To begin, I think, as low as I well can, with the watchmen in our metropolis: who, being to guard our ſtreets by night from thieves and robbers, an office which at leaſt requires ſtrength of body, are choſen out of thoſe poor old decrepit people, who are, from their want of bodily ſtrength, rendered incapable of getting a livelihood by work. Theſe men, armed only with a pole, which ſome of them are ſcarce able to lift, are to ſecure the perſons and houſes of his majeſty's ſubjects from the attacks of gangs of young, bold, ſtout, deſperate, and well armed villains.

Quæ non viribus iſtis
Munera conveniunt.

If the poor old fellows ſhould run away from ſuch enemies, no one I think can wonder, unleſs it be that they were able to make their eſcape.

The higher we proceed among our public officers and magiſtrates, the leſs defects of this kind will, perhaps, be obſervable. Mr. Thraſher, however, the juſtice before whom the priſoners above-mentioned were now brought, had ſome few imperfections in his magiſtratical capacity. I own, I have been ſometimes inclined to think, that this office of a juſtice of peace requires ſome knowledge of the law: for this ſimple reaſon; becauſe in every caſe which comes before *him, he is* to judge and act according to law. Again,

as theſe laws are contained in a great variety of books; the ſtatutes which relate to the office of a juſtice of peace making of themſelves at leaſt two large volumes in folio; and that part of his juriſdiction which is founded on the common law being diſperſed in an hundred volumes, I cannot conceive how this knowledge ſhould be acquired without reading; and yet, certain it is, Mr. Thraſher never read one ſyllable of the matter.

This, perhaps, was a defect; but this was not all: for where mere ignorance is to decide a point between two litigants, it will always be an even chance whether it decides right or wrong; but ſorry am I to ſay, right was often in a much worſe ſituation than this, and wrong hath often had five hundred to one on his ſide before that magiſtrate; who, if he was ignorant of the law of England, was yet well verſed in the laws of nature. He perfectly well underſtood that fundamental principle ſo ſtrongly laid down in the inſtitutes of the learned Rochefoucault; by which the duty of ſelf-love is ſo ſtrongly enforced, and every man is taught to conſider himſelf as the centre of gravity, and to attract all things thither. To ſpeak the truth plainly, the juſtice was never indifferent in a cauſe, but when he could get nothing on either ſide.

Such was the juſtice, to whoſe tremendous bar Mr. Gotobed the conſtable, on the day abovementioned, brought ſeveral delinquents, who, as we have ſaid, had been apprehended by the watch for diverſe outrages.

The firſt who came upon his trial, was as bloody a ſpectre as ever the imagination of a murderer or a tragic poet conceived. This poor wretch was charged with a battery by a much ſtouter man than himſelf; indeed the accuſed perſon bore about him ſome evidence that he had been in an affray, his clothes being very bloody: but certain open ſluices on his own head ſufficiently ſhowed whence all the ſcarlet ſtream had iſſued: whereas the accuſer had not the leaſt mark or appearance of any wound. The juſtice aſked the defendant, what he meant by

breaking the king's peace—To which he anſwered,—'Upon my ſhoul I do love the king very well, 'and I have not been after breaking any thing of 'his that I do know: but upon my ſhoul this man 'hath brake my head, and my head did brake his 'ſtick; that is all gra.' He then offered to produce ſeveral witneſſes againſt this improbable accuſation; but the juſtice preſently interrupted him, ſaying, 'Sirrah, your tongue betrays your guilt. You are 'an Iriſhman, and that is always ſufficient evidence 'with me.'

The ſecond criminal was a poor woman, who was taken up by the watch as a ſtreet-walker. It was alledged againſt her that ſhe was found walking the ſtreets after twelve o'clock, and the watchman declared he believed her to be a common ſtrumpet. She pleaded in her defence (as was really the truth) that ſhe was a ſervant, and was ſent by her miſtreſs, who was a little ſhopkeeper, and upon the point of delivery, to fetch a midwife; which ſhe offered to prove by ſeveral of the neighbours, if ſhe was allowed to ſend for them. The juſtice aſked her why ſhe had not done it before. To which ſhe anſwered, ſhe had no money, and could get no meſſenger. The juſtice then called her ſeveral ſcurrilous names; and declared ſhe was guilty within the ſtatute of ſtreet-walking, ordered her to Bridewell for a month.

A genteel young man and woman were then ſet forward, and a very grave looking perſon ſwore he caught them in a ſituation which we cannot as particularly deſcribe here, as he did before the magiſtrate; who, having received a wink from his clerk, declared with much warmth the fact was incredible and impoſſible. He preſently diſcharged the accuſed parties, and was going, without any evidence to commit the accuſer for perjury; but this the clerk diſſuaded him from, ſaying, he doubted whether a juſtice of peace had any ſuch power. The juſtice at firſt differed in opinion; and ſaid, 'He 'had ſeen a man ſtand in the pillory about perjury; 'nay, he had known a man in gaol for it too; and

'how

'how came he there, if he was not committed 'thither? why that is true, Sir,' anſwered the clerk, 'and yet I have been told by a very great lawyer, 'that a man cannot be committed for perjury be- 'fore he is indicted; and the reaſon is, I believe, 'becauſe it is not againſt the peace before the in- 'dictment makes it ſo.'—'Why that may be,' cries the juſtice; 'and indeed perjury is but ſcandalous 'words, and I know a man can have no warrant 'for thoſe, unleſs you put for rioting * them into 'the warrant.'

The witneſs was now about to be diſcharged, when the lady whom he had accuſed, declared ſhe would ſwear the peace againſt him; for that he had called her a whore ſeveral times. 'Oho! you will 'ſwear the peace, madam, will you?' cries the juſtice, 'Give her the peace preſently; and pray, 'Mr. Conſtable, ſecure the priſoner, now we have 'him, while a warrant is made to take him up.' All which was immediately performed, and the poor witneſs for want of ſureties was ſent to priſon.

A young fellow, whoſe name was Booth, was now charged with beating the watchman in the execution of his office, and breaking his lanthorn. This was depoſed by two witneſſes; and the ſhattered remains of a broken lanthorn, which had been long preſerved for the ſake of its teſtimony, were produced to corroborate the evidence. The juſtice, perceiving the criminal to be but ſhabbily dreſſed, was going to commit him without aſking any further queſtions. At length, however, at the earneſt requeſt of the accuſed

* *Opus eſt interprete.* By the laws of England abuſive words are not puniſhable by the magiſtrate; ſome commiſſioners of the peace therefore, when one ſcold hath applied to them for a warrant againſt another, from a too eager deſire of doing juſtice, have conſtrued a little harmleſs ſcolding into a riot, which is in law an outrageous breach of the peace, committed by ſeveral perſons, by three at the leaſt, nor can a leſs number be convicted of it. Under this word rioting, or riotting (for I have ſeen it ſpelt both ways) many thouſands of old women have been arreſted and put to expence, ſometimes in priſon, for a litrle intemperate uſe of their tongues. This practice began to decreaſe in the year 1749.

the worthy magiſtrate ſubmitted, to hear his defence. The young man then alledged, as was in reality the caſe, 'That as he was walking home to his lodging, 'he ſaw two men in the ſtreet cruelly beating a third, 'upon which he had ſtopped and endeavoured to aſſiſt 'the perſon who was ſo unequally attacked; that the 'watch came up during the affray, and took them 'all four into cuſtody; that they were immediately 'carried to the round-houſe, where the two origi-'nal aſſailants, who appeared to be men of fortune, 'found means to make up the matter, and were 'diſcharged by the conſtable; a favour which he 'himſelf, having no money in his pocket, was un-'able to obtain. He utterly denied having aſſaulted 'any of the watchmen, and ſolemnly declared, that 'he was offered his liberty at the price of half a 'crown.'

Though the bare word of an offender can never be taken againſt the oath of his accuſer; yet the matter of this defence was ſo pertinent, and delivered with ſuch an air of truth and ſincerity, that, had the magiſtrate been endued with much ſagacity, or had he been very moderately gifted with another quality very neceſſary to all who are to adminiſter juſtice, he would have employed ſome labour in croſs-examining the watchmen; at leaſt he would have given the defendant the time he deſired to ſend for the other perſons who were preſent at the affray; neither of which he did. In ſhort, the magiſtrate had too great an honour for truth, to ſuſpect that ſhe ever appeared in ſordid apparel; nor did he ever fully his ſublime notions of that virtue, by uniting them with the mean ideas of poverty and diſtreſs.

There remained now only one priſoner, and that was the poor man himſelf in whoſe defence the laſt mentioned culprit was engaged. His tryal took but a very ſhort time. A cauſe of battery and broken lanthorn was inſtituted againſt him, and proved in the ſame manner; nor would the juſtice hear one word in defence: but though his patience *was exhauſted*, his breath was not; for againſt this

laſt

laſt wretch he poured forth a great many vollies of menaces and abuſe.

The delinquents were then all diſpatched to priſon, under a guard of watchmen; and the juſtice and the conſtable adjourned to a neighbouring alehouſe, to take their morning repaſt.

CHAP. III.

Containing the inſide of a priſon.

MR. Booth (for we ſhall not trouble you with the reſt) was no ſooner arrived in the priſon, than a number of perſons gathered round him, all demanding garniſh; to which Mr. Booth not making a ready anſwer, as indeed he did not underſtand the word, ſome were going to lay hold of him, when a perſon of apparent dignity came up and inſiſted that no one ſhould affront the gentleman. The perſon then, who was no leſs than the maſter or keeper of the priſon, turning towards Mr. Booth, acquainted him, that it was the cuſtom of the place for every priſoner, upon his firſt arrival there, to give ſomething to the former priſoners to make them drink. This, he ſaid, was what they called garniſh; and concluded with adviſing his new cuſtomer to draw his purſe upon the preſent occaſion. Mr. Booth anſwered, that he would very readily comply with this laudable cuſtom was it in his power; but that in reality he had not a ſhilling in his pocket, and what was worſe, he had not a ſhilling in the world.——'Oho! if that be the caſe,' cries the keeper 'it is another matter, and I have nothing to ſay.' Upon which he immediately departed, and left poor Booth to the mercy of his companions, who, without loſs of time, applied themſelves to uncaſing, as they termed it, and with ſuch dexterity, that his coat was not only ſtripped off, but out of ſight in a minute.

Mr. Booth was too weak to reſiſt, and too wiſe to complain of this uſage. As ſoon therefore as he was at liberty, and declared free of the place, he ſummoned his philoſophy, of which he had no

inconſiderable ſhare, to his aſſiſtance, and reſolved to make himſelf as eaſy as poſſible under his preſent circumſtances.

Could his own thoughts indeed have ſuffered him a moment to forget where he was, the diſpoſitions of the other priſoners might have induced him to believe that he had been in a happier place: for much the greater part of his fellow-ſufferers, inſtead of wailing and repining at their condition, were laughing, ſinging, and diverting themſelves with various kinds of ſports and gambols.

The firſt perſon who accoſted him was called Blear-Eyed Moll; a woman of no very comely appearance. Her eye (for ſhe had but one) whence ſhe derived her nick-name, was ſuch as that nick-name beſpoke; beſides which it had two remarkable qualities; for firſt, as if nature had been careful to provide for her own defect, it conſtantly looked towards the blind ſide; and ſecondly, the ball conſiſted almoſt entirely of white, or rather yellow, with a little grey ſpot in the corner, ſo ſmall that it was ſcarce diſcernible. Noſe ſhe had none; for Venus, envious perhaps of her former charms, had carried off the griſly part; and ſome earthly damſel, perhaps from the ſame envy, had levelled the bone with the reſt of her face, indeed it was far beneath the bones of her cheeks, which roſe proportionably higher than is uſual. About half a dozen ebony teeth fortified that large and long canal which nature had cut from ear to ear, at the bottom of which was a chin, prepoſterouſly ſhort, nature having turned up the bottom, inſtead of ſuffering it to grow to its due length.

Her body was well adapted to her face; ſhe meaſured full as much round the middle as from head to foot; for beſides the extreme breadth of her back, her vaſt breaſts had long ſince forſaken their native home, and ſettled themſelves a little below the girdle.

I wiſh certain actreſſes on the ſtage, when they are to perform characters of no amiable caſt, would ſtudy to dreſs themſelves with the propriety with which

which Blear Eyed-Moll was now arrayed. For the ſake of our ſqueamiſh reader, we ſhall not deſcend to particulars. Let it ſuffice to ſay, nothing more ragged, or more dirty, was ever emptied out of the round houſe at St. Giles's.

We have taken the more pains to deſcribe this perſon, for two remarkable reaſons; the one is, that this unlovely creature was taken in the fact with a very pretty young fellow; the other, which is more productive of moral leſſon, is, that however wretched her fortune may appear to the reader, ſhe was one of the merrieſt perſons in the whole priſon.

Blear-Eyed-Moll then came up to Mr. Booth with a ſmile, or rather grin on her countenance, and aſked him for a dram of gin; and when Booth aſſured her that he had not a penny of money, ſhe replied, —'D——n your eyes, I thought by your 'look you had been a clever fellow, and upon the 'ſnaffling lay * at leaſt: but d——n your body 'and eyes, I find you are ſome ſneaking budge † 'raſcal.' She then launched forth a volley of dreadful oaths, interlarded with ſome language not proper to be repeated here, and was going to lay hold on poor Booth, when a tall priſoner, who had been very earneſtly eyeing Booth for ſome time, came up, and taking her by the ſhoulder, flung her off at ſome diſtance, curſing her for a b—h, and bidding her let the gentleman alone.

This perſon was not himſelf of the moſt inviting aſpect. He was long viſaged, and pale, with a red beard of about a fortnight's growth. He was attired in a browniſh black coat, which would have ſhowed more holes than it did, had not the linen which appeared through it, been entirely of the ſame colour with the cloth.

This gentleman, whoſe name was Robinſon, addreſſed himſelf very civilly to Mr. Booth, and told him he was ſorry to ſee one of his appearance in that place: 'For as to your being without your coat,

* A cant term for robbery on the highway.
† Another cant term for pilfering.

'Sir,' says 'he, I can easily account for that; and 'indeed dress is the least part which distinguishes a 'gentleman.' At which words he cast a significant look on his own coat, as if he desired they should be applied to himself. He then proceeded in the following manner:

'I perceive, Sir, you are but just arrived in this 'dismal place, which is, indeed, rendered more 'detestable by the wretches who inhabit it, than 'by any other circumstance: but even these a wise 'man will soon bring himself to bear with indifference: for what is, is; and what must be, must 'be. The knowledge of this, which, simple as it 'appears, is in truth the heighth of all philosophy, 'renders a wise man superior to every evil which 'can befal him. I hope, Sir, no very dreadful accident is the cause of your coming hither; but 'whatever it was, you may be assured it could not 'be otherwise: for all things happen by an inevitable fatality; and a man can no more resist the 'impulse of fate, than a wheel-barrow can the force 'of its driver.'

Besides the obligation which Mr. Robinson had conferred on Mr. Booth, in delivering him from the insults of Blear-Eyed-Moll, there was something in the manner of Robinson, which, notwithstanding the meanness of his dress, seemed to distinguish him from the crowd of wretches who swarmed in those regions; and above all, the sentiments which he had just declared, very nearly coincided with those of Mr. Booth: this gentleman was what they call a free-thinker: that is to say, a deist; or, perhaps, an atheist; for though he did not absolutely deny the existence of a God; yet he entirely denied his providence. A doctrine which, if it is not downright atheism, hath a direct tendency towards it; and, as Dr. Clarke observes, may soon be driven into it. And as to Mr. Booth, though he was in his heart an extreme well-wisher to religion (for he was an honest man) yet his notions of it were very slight and uncertain. To say the truth,

he

he was in the wavering condition ſo finely deſcribed by Claudian:

labefacta cadebat
Religio, cauſæque viam non ſponte *ſequebar*
Alterius; vacuo quæ currere ſemina motu
Affirmat; magnumque novas per inane figuras
Fortuna, non arte, regi; que numina ſenſu
Ambiguo, vel nulla putat, vel neſcia noſtri.

This way of thinking, or rather of doubting, he had contracted from the ſame reaſons which Claudian aſſigns, and which had induced Brutus, in his latter days, to doubt the exiſtence of that virtue which he had all his life cultivated. In ſhort, poor Booth imagined, that a larger ſhare of misfortunes had fallen to his lot than he had merited; and this led him, who (though a good claſſical ſcholar) was not deeply learned in religious matters, into a diſadvantageous opinion of Providence. A dangerous way of reaſoning, in which our concluſions are not only too haſty, from an imperfect view of things; but we are likewiſe liable to much error from partiality to ourſelves; viewing our virtues and vices as through a perſpective, in which we turn the glaſs always to our own advantage, ſo as to diminiſh the one, and as greatly to magnify the other.

From the above reaſons, it can be no wonder that Mr. Booth did not decline the acquaintance of this perſon, in a place which could not promiſe to afford him any better. He anſwered him, therefore, with great courteſy, as indeed he was of a very good and gentle diſpoſition; and after expreſſing a civil ſurpriſe at meeting him there, declared himſelf to be of the ſame opinion with regard to the neceſſity of human actions; adding, however, that he did not believe men were under any blind impulſe or direction of fate; but that every man acted merely from the force of that paſſion which was uppermoſt in his mind, and could do no otherwiſe.

A diſcourſe now enſued between the two gentlemen, on the neceſſity ariſing from the impulſe of fate, and the neceſſity ariſing from the impulſe of paſſion, which

as it will make a pretty pamphlet of itſelf, we ſhall reſerve for ſome future opportunity. When this was ended, they ſet forward to ſurvey the gaol, and the priſoners, with the ſeveral caſes of whom Mr. Robinſon, who had been ſome time under confinement, undertook to make Mr. Booth acquainted.

CHAP. IV.

Diſcloſing further ſecrets of the priſon-houſe.

THE firſt perſons whom they paſſed by were three men in fetters, who were enjoying themſelves very merrily over a bottle of wine, and a pipe of tobacco. Theſe, Mr. Robinſon informed his friend, were three ſtreet-robbers, and were all certain of being hanged the enſuing ſeſſion. So inconſiderable an object, ſaid he, is miſery to light minds, when it is at any diſtance.

A little farther they beheld a man proſtrate on the ground, whoſe heavy groans, and frantic actions, plainly indicated the higheſt diſorder of mind. This perſon was, it ſeems, committed for a ſmall felony; and his wife, who then lay-in, upon hearing the news, had thrown herſelf from a window two pair of ſtairs high, by which means he had, in all probability, loſt both her and his child.

A very pretty girl then advanced towards them, whoſe beauty Mr. Booth could not help admiring the moment he ſaw her; declaring, at the ſame time, he thought ſhe had great innocence in her countenance. Robinſon ſaid ſhe was committed thither as an idle and diſorderly perſon, and a common ſtreet-walker. As ſhe paſſed by Mr. Booth, ſhe damn'd his eyes, and diſcharged a volley of words, every one of which was too indecent to be repeated.

They now beheld a little creature ſitting by herſelf in a corner and crying bitterly. This girl, Mr. Robinſon ſaid, was committed, becauſe her father-in-law, who was in the grenadier guards, had ſworn that he was afraid of his life, or of ſome bodily harm, which ſhe would do him, and ſhe could get

no

no ſureties for keeping the peace: for which reaſon Juſtice Thraſher had committed her to priſon.

A great noiſe now aroſe, occaſioned by the priſoners all flocking to ſee a fellow whipped for petty larceny, to which he was condemned by the court of quarter-ſeſſions; but this ſoon ended in the diſappointment of the ſpectators: for the fellow, after being ſtripped, having advanced another ſix-pence, was diſcharged untouched.

This was immediately followed by another buſtle. Blear Eyed-Moll, and ſeveral of her companions, having got poſſeſſion of a man who was committed for certain odious unmanlike practices, not fit to be named, were giving him various kinds of diſcipline, and would probably have put an end to him, had he not been reſcued out of their hands by authority.

When this buſtle was a little allayed, Mr. Booth took notice of a young woman in rags ſitting on the ground, and ſupporting the head of an old man in her lap, who appeared to be giving up the ghoſt. Theſe, Mr. Robinſon informed him, were father and daughter; that the latter was committed for ſtealing a loaf, in order to ſupport the former, and the former for receiving it knowing to be ſtolen.

A well-dreſſed man then walked ſurlily by them, whom Mr. Robinſon reported to have been committed on an indictment found againſt him for a moſt horrid perjury; but, ſays he, we expect him to be bailed to-day. Good heaven! cries Booth, can ſuch villains find bail, and is no perſon charitable enough to bail that poor father and daughter? Oh! ſir, anſwered Robinſon, the offence of the daughter, being felony, is held not to be bailable in law; whereas perjury is a miſdemeanor only; and therefore perſons who are even indicted for it, are, nevertheleſs, capable of being bailed. Nay, of all perjuries, that of which this man is indicted is the worſt: for it was with an intention of taking away the life of an innocent perſon by form of law. As to perjuries in civil matters, they are not ſo very criminal. They are not, ſaid Booth; and yet even

theſe

theſe are a moſt flagitious offence, and worthy the higheſt puniſhment. Surely they ought to be diſtinguiſhed, anſwered Robinſon, from the others: for what is taking away a little property from a man compared to taking away his life, and his reputation, and ruining his family into the bargain?—I hope there can be no compariſon in the crimes, and I think there ought to be none in the puniſhment. However, at preſent, the puniſhment of all perjury is only pillory, and tranſportation for ſeven years; and as it is a traverſable and bailable offence, methods are often found to eſcape any puniſhment at all *.

Booth expreſſed great aſtoniſhment at this, when his attention was ſuddenly diverted by the moſt miſerable object that he had yet ſeen. This was a wretch almoſt naked, and who bore in his countenance, joined to an appearance of honeſty, the marks of poverty, hunger, and diſeaſe. He had, moreover, a wooden leg, and two or three ſcars on his forehead. The caſe of this poor man is, indeed, unhappy enough, ſaid Robinſon. He hath ſerved his country, loſt his limb, and received ſeveral wounds at the ſiege of Gibraltar. When he was diſcharged from the hoſpital abroad, he came over to get into that of Chelſea, but could not immediately, as none of his officers were then in England. In the mean time, he was one day apprehended and committed hither on ſuſpicion of ſtealing three herrings from a fiſhmonger. He was tried ſeveral months ago for this offence, and acquitted; indeed his innocence manifeſtly appeared at the trial; but he was brought back again for his fees, and here he hath lain ever ſince.

Booth expreſſed great horror at this account, and declared if he had only ſo much money in his pocket, he would pay his fees for him; but added,

* By removing the indictment by *certiorari* into the King's-bench, the trial is ſo long poſtponed, and the coſts are ſo highly encreaſed, that proſecutors are often tired out, and ſome incapacitated from purſuing. *Verbum ſapienti.*

that

that he was not poſſeſſed of a ſingle farthing in the world.

Robinſon heſitated a moment, and then ſaid, with a ſmile, 'I am going to make you, ſir, a very odd 'propoſal after your laſt declaration; but what 'ſay you to a game at cards? it will ſerve to paſs a 'tedious hour, and may divert your thoughts from 'more unpleaſant ſpeculations.'

I do not imagine Booth would have agreed to this: for though ſome love of gaming had been formerly amongſt his faults; yet he was not ſo egregiouſly addicted to that vice, as to be tempted by the ſhabby plight of Robinſon, who had, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, no charms for a gameſter. If he had, however, any ſuch inclinations, he had no opportunity to follow them: for before he could make any anſwer to Robinſon's propoſal, a ſtrapping wench came up to Booth, and taking hold of his arm, aſked him to walk aſide with her; ſaying, 'What a pox, are you 'ſuch a freſh cull that you do not know this fellow? 'why, he is a gambler, and committed for cheating 'at play. There is not ſuch a pickpocket in the 'whole quad*.'

A ſcene of altercation now enſued, between Robinſon and the lady, which ended in a bout at fiſticuffs, in which the lady was greatly ſuperior to the philoſopher.

While the two combatants were engaged, a grave looking man, rather better dreſſed than the majority of the company, came up to Mr. Booth, and taking him aſide, ſaid, 'I am ſorry, ſir, to ſee a gentleman, 'as you appear to be, in ſuch intimacy with that 'raſcal, who makes no ſcruple of diſowning all re'vealed religion. As for crimes, they are human 'errors, and ſignify but little; nay, perhaps, the 'worſe a man is by nature, the more room there is for 'grace. The ſpirit is active, and loves beſt to in'habit thoſe minds where it may meet with the moſt 'work. Whatever your crime be, therefore, I would 'not have you deſpair; but rather rejoice at it: for 'perhaps it may be the means of your being called.'

* A cant word for a priſon.

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He ran on for a conſiderable time with this cant, without waiting for an anſwer, and ended in declaring himſelf a methodiſt.

Juſt as the methodiſt had finiſhed this diſcourſe, a beautiful young woman was uſhered into the gaol. She was genteel and well dreſſed, and did not in the leaſt reſemble thoſe females whom Mr. Booth had hitherto ſeen. The conſtable had no ſooner delivered her at the gate, than ſhe aſked, with a commanding voice, for the keeper; and, when he arrived, ſhe ſaid to him, 'Well, ſir, whither am I to be conducted? 'I hope I am not to take up my lodging with theſe 'creatures.' The keeper anſwered with a kind of ſurly reſpect, 'Madam, we have rooms for thoſe 'that can afford to pay for them.' At theſe words ſhe pulled a handſome purſe from her pocket, in which many guineas chinked, ſaying, with an air of indignation, 'that ſhe was not come thither on ac-'count of poverty.' The keeper no ſooner viewed the purſe, than his features became all ſoftened in an inſtant; and with all the courteſy of which he was maſter, he deſired the lady to walk with him, aſſuring her that ſhe ſhould have the beſt apartment in his houſe.

Mr. Booth was now left alone; for the methodiſt had forſaken him, having, as the phraſe of the ſect is, ſearched him to the bottom. In fact, he had thoroughly examined every one of Mr. Booth's pockets; from which he had conveyed away a pen-knife, and an iron ſnuff box, theſe being all the moveables which were to be found.

Booth was ſtanding near the gate of the priſon, when the young lady above-mentioned was introduced into the yard. He viewed her features very attentively, and was perſuaded that he knew her. She was indeed ſo remarkably handſome, that it was hardly poſſible for any who had ever ſeen her to forget her. He enquired of one of the under-keepers, if the name of the priſoner lately arrived was not Matthews; to which he was anſwered, that her name was not Matthews but Vincent, and that ſhe was committed for murder.

The

The latter part of this information made Mr. Booth ſuſpect his memory more than the former: for it was very poſſible that ſhe might have changed her name; but he hardly thought ſhe could ſo far have changed her nature as to be guilty of a crime ſo very incongruous with her former gentle manners: for Miſs Matthews had both the birth and education of a gentlewoman. He concluded, therefore, that he was certainly miſtaken, and reſted ſatisfied without any further enquiry.

CHAP. V.

Containing certain adventures which befel Mr. Booth *in the priſon.*

THE remainder of the day Mr. Booth ſpent in melancholy contemplation on his preſent condition. He was deſtitute of the common neceſſaries of life, and conſequently unable to ſubſiſt where he was; nor was there a ſingle perſon in town to whom he could, with any reaſonable hope, apply for his delivery. Grief for ſome time baniſhed the thoughts of food from his mind; but, in the morning, nature began to grow uneaſy for want of her uſual nouriſhment: for he had not eat a morſel during the laſt forty hours. A penny loaf, which is, it ſeems, the ordinary allowance to the priſoners in Bridewell, was now delivered him; and while he was eating this, a man brought him a little packet ſealed up, informing him that it came by a meſſenger who ſaid it required no anſwer.

Mr. Booth now opened his packet, and after unfolding ſeveral pieces of blank paper ſucceſſively, at laſt diſcovered a guinea, wrapped with great care in the innermoſt paper. He was vaſtly ſurpriſed at this ſight, as he had few, if any friends, from whom he could expect ſuch a favour, ſlight as it was; and not one of his friends, as he was appriſed, knew of his confinement. As there was no direction to the packet, nor a word of writing contained in it, he began to ſuſpect that it was delivered to the wrong perſon; and, being one of the moſt untainted honeſty, he found out the man who gave it to him, and again examined him concerning the perſon who brought it,

and

and the meſſage delivered with it. The man aſſured Booth that he had made no miſtake; ſaying, 'if your 'name is Booth, ſir, I am poſitive you are the gen-'tleman to whom the parcel I gave you belongs.'

The moſt ſcrupulous honeſty would, perhaps, in ſuch a ſituation, have been well enough ſatisfied in finding no owner for the guinea; eſpecially when proclamation had been made in the priſon, that Mr. Booth had received a packet without any direction, to which, if any perſon had any claim, and would diſcover the contents, he was ready to deliver it to ſuch claimant. No ſuch claimant being found (I mean none who knew the contents; for many ſwore that they expected juſt ſuch a packet, and believed it to be their property) Mr. Booth very calmly reſolved to apply the money to his own uſe.

The firſt thing after redemption of the coat, which Mr. Booth, hungry as he was, thought of, was to ſupply himſelf with ſnuff, which he had long, to his great ſorrow, been without. On this occaſion, he preſently miſſed that iron box which the methodiſt had ſo dextrouſly conveyed out of his pocket, as we mentioned in the laſt chapter.

He no ſooner miſſed this box, than he immediately ſuſpected that the gambler was the perſon who had ſtolen it; nay, ſo well was he aſſured of this man's guilt, that it may, perhaps, be improper to ſay he barely ſuſpected it. Though Mr. Booth was, as we have hinted, a man of a very ſweet diſpoſition; yet was he rather over-warm. Having, therefore, no doubt concerning the perſon of the thief, he eagerly ſought him out, and very bluntly charged him with the fact.

The gambler, whom I think we ſhould now call the philoſopher, received this charge without the leaſt viſible emotion either of mind or muſcle. After a ſhort pauſe of a few moments, he anſwered, with great ſolemnity, as follows: 'Young man, I am en-'tirely unconcerned at your groundleſs ſuſpicion. 'He that cenſures a ſtranger, as I am to you, with-'out any cauſe, makes a worſe compliment to him-'ſelf than to the ſtranger. You know yourſelf,

'friend;

'friend; you know not me, It is true indeed you 'heard me accuſed of being a cheat and a gameſter; 'but who is my accuſer? look at my apparel, friend, 'do thieves and gameſters wear ſuch clothes as theſe? 'play is my folly, not my vice; it is my impulſe, 'and I have been a martyr to it. Would a gameſter 'have aſked another to play when he could have loſt 'eighteen pence and won nothing? however, if you 'are not ſatisfied you may ſearch my pockets; the 'outſide of all but one will ſerve your turn, and in 'that one, there is the eighteen pence I told you of.' He then turned up his clothes; and his pockets entirely reſembled the pitchers of the Belides.

Booth was a little ſtaggered at this defence. He ſaid, the real value of the iron box was too inconſiderable to mention; but that he had a capricious value for it, for the ſake of the perſon who gave it him: 'for though it is not,' ſaid he, 'worth ſix-pence, I 'would willingly give a crown to any one who 'would bring it me again.'

Robinſon anſwered, 'if that be the caſe, you have 'nothing more to do but to ſignify your intention in 'the priſon; and I am well convinced you will not 'be long without regaining the poſſeſſion of your 'ſnuff-box.'

This advice was immediately followed, and with ſucceſs, the methodiſt preſently producing the box; which, he ſaid, he had found, and ſhould have returned it before, had he known the perſon to whom it belonged; adding, with uplifted eyes, that the ſpirit would not ſuffer him knowingly to detain the goods of another, however inconſiderable the value was. 'Why ſo, friend?' ſaid Robinſon. 'Have 'I not heard your often ſay, the wickeder any man 'was, the better, provided he was what you call a 'believer.'—'You miſtake me,' cries Cooper (for that was the name of the methodiſt) 'no man can be 'wicked after he is poſſeſſed by the ſpirit. There is 'a wide difference between the days of ſin, and the 'days of grace. I have been a ſinner myſelf.'—'I 'believe thee,' cries Robinſon, with a ſneer. 'I care 'not, anſwered the other, what an atheiſt believes. 'I ſuppoſe you would inſinuate that I ſtole the ſnuff-

'box; but I value not your malice: the Lord knows 'my innocence.' He then walked off with the reward; and Booth turning to Robinſon, very earneſtly aſked pardon for his groundleſs ſuſpicion; which the other, without any heſitation, accorded him, ſaying, 'You never accuſed me, ſir; you ſuſpected ſome 'gambler, with whoſe character I have no concern. 'I ſhould be angry with a friend or acquaintance who 'ſhould give a haſty credit to any allegation againſt 'me; but I have no reaſon to be offended with you 'for believing what the woman, and the raſcal who 'is juſt gone, and who is committed here for a pick-'pocket, which you did not perhaps know, told you 'to my diſadvantage. And if you thought me to be 'a gambler, you had juſt reaſon to ſuſpect any ill of 'me: for I myſelf am confined here by the perjury 'of one of thoſe villains; who having cheated me 'of my money at play, and hearing that I intended 'to apply to a magiſtrate againſt him, himſelf began 'the attack, and obtained a warrant againſt me of 'Juſtice Thraſher, who, without hearing one ſpeech 'in my defence, committed me to this place.'

Booth teſtified great compaſſion at this account; and he having invited Robinſon to dinner, they ſpent that day together. In the afternoon, Booth indulged his friend with a game at cards; at firſt for half-pence, and afterwards for ſhillings, when fortune ſo favoured Robinſon, that he did not leave the other a ſingle ſhilling in his pocket.

A ſurpriſing run of luck in a gameſter, is often miſtaken for ſomewhat elſe, by perſons who are not over zealous believers in the divinity of fortune. I have known a ſtranger at Bath, who hath happened fortunately (I might almoſt ſay unfortunately) to have four by honours in his hand almoſt every time he dealt, for a whole evening, ſhunned univerſally by the whole company the next day. And certain it is, that Mr. Booth, though of a temper very little inclined to ſuſpicion, began to waver in his opinion, whether the character given by Mr. Robinſon of himſelf, or that which the others gave of him, was the truer.

In

In the morning, hunger paid him a ſecond viſit, and found him again in the ſame ſituation as before. After ſome deliberation, therefore, he reſolved to aſk Robinſon to lend him a ſhilling or two of that money which was lately his own. And this experiment, he thought, would confirm him either in a good or evil opinion of that gentleman.

To this demand, Robinſon anſwered, with great alacrity, that he ſhould very gladly have complied, had not fortune played one of her jade tricks with him: 'for ſince my winning of you,' ſaid he, 'I 'have been ſtripped not only of your money, but my 'own.' He was going to harangue farther; but Booth, with great indignation, turned from him.

This poor gentleman had very little time to reflect on his own miſery, or the raſcality, as it appeared to him, of the other, when the ſame perſon, who had the day before delivered him the guinea from the unknown hand, again accoſted him, and told him a lady in the houſe (ſo he expreſſed himſelf) deſired the favour of his company.

Mr. Booth immediately obeyed the meſſage, and was conducted into a room in the priſon, where he was preſently convinced that Mrs. Vincent was no other than his old acquaintance Miſs Matthews.

CHAP. VI.

Containing the extraordinary behaviour of Miſs Matthews *on her meeting with* Booth, *and ſome endeavours to prove, by reaſon and authority, that it is poſſible for a woman to appear to be what ſhe really is not.*

EIGHT or nine years had paſſed ſince any interview between Mr. Booth and Miſs Matthews; and their meeting now in ſo extraordinary a place affected both of them with an equal ſurpriſe.

After ſome immaterial ceremonies, the lady acquainted Mr. Booth, that having heard there was a perſon in the priſon who knew her by the name of Matthews, ſhe had great curioſity to enquire who

he

he was, whereupon he had been ſhewn to her from the window of the houſe; that ſhe immediately recollected him, and being informed of his diſtreſsful ſituation, for which ſhe expreſſed great concern, ſhe had ſent him that guinea which he had received the day before; and then proceeded to excuſe herſelf for not having deſired to ſee him at that time, when ſhe was under the greateſt diſorder and hurry of ſpirits.

Booth made many handſome acknowledgments of her favour; and added, that he very little wondered at the diſorder of her ſpirits, concluding, that he was heartily concerned at ſeeing her there; but I hope, madam, ſaid he——

Here he heſitated; upon which, burſting into an agony of tears, ſhe cried out, 'O captain, captain, 'many extraordinary things have paſt ſince laſt I ſaw 'you. O gracious heaven! did I ever expect that 'this would be the next place of our meeting!'

She then flung herſelf into her chair, where ſhe gave a looſe to her paſſion, whilſt he, in the moſt affectionate and tender manner, endeavoured to ſooth and comfort her; but paſſion itſelf did, probably, more for its own relief than all his friendly conſolations. Having vented this in a large flood of tears, ſhe became pretty well compoſed; but Booth unhappily mentioning her father, ſhe again relapſed into an agony, and cried out, 'Why? why will you repeat 'the name of that dear man? I have diſgraced him, 'Mr. Booth, I am unworthy the name of his daugh-'ter.'—Here paſſion again ſtopped her words, and diſcharged itſelf in tears.

After this ſecond vent of ſorrow or ſhame; or, if the reader pleaſes, of rage, ſhe once more recovered from her agonies. To ſay the truth, theſe are, I believe, as critical diſcharges of nature, as any of thoſe which are ſo called by the phyſicians; and do more effectually relieve the mind than any remedies with which the whole Materia Medica of philoſophy can ſupply it.

When Mrs. Vincent had recovered her faculties, ſhe perceived Booth ſtanding ſilent, with a mixture of concern and aſtoniſhment in his countenance; then

then addreſſing herſelf to him with an air of moſt bewitching ſoftneſs, of which ſhe was a perfect miſtreſs, ſhe ſaid, 'I do not wonder at your amazement, 'Captain Booth; nor indeed at the concern which 'you ſo plainly diſcover for me: for I well know the 'goodneſs of your nature; but, O Mr. Booth! be-'lieve me, when you know what hath happened ſince 'our laſt meeting, your concern will be raiſed, how-'ever your aſtoniſhment may ceaſe. O, ſir, you are 'a ſtranger to the cauſe of my ſorrows.'

'I hope, I am, madam,' anſwered he; 'for I can-'not believe what I have heard in the priſon—ſurely 'murder'—at which words ſhe ſtarted from her chair, repeating, murder! 'Oh! it is muſic in my ears.—'You have heard then the cauſe of my commitment, 'my glory, my delight, my reparation!—Yes, my 'old friend, this is the hand, this is the arm that 'drove the penknife to his heart. Unkind fortune, 'that not one drop of his blood reached my hand. '—Indeed, ſir, I would never have waſhed it from 'it.—But though I have not the happineſs to ſee it 'on my hand, I have the glorious ſatisfaction of re-'membring I ſaw it run in rivers on the floor;' I ſaw 'it forſake his cheeks. I ſaw him fall a martyr to 'my revenge. And is the killing a villain to be call-'ed murder? perhaps the law calls it ſo.—Let it 'call it what it will, or puniſh me as it pleaſes.—— 'Puniſh me!—no, no—That is not in the power of 'man—not of that monſter man, Mr. Booth. I am 'undone, am revenged, and have now no more bu-'ſineſs for life; let them take it from me when they 'will.'

Our poor gentleman turned pale with horror at this ſpeech, and the ejaculation of Good Heavens! what do I hear! burſt ſpontaneouſly from his lips; nor can we wonder at this, though he was the braveſt of men; for her voice, her looks, her geſtures, were properly adapted to the ſentiments ſhe expreſſed. Such indeed was her image, that neither could Shakſpeare deſcribe, nor Hogarth paint, nor Clive act a fury in higher perfection.

'What do you hear?' reiterated ſhe. 'You hear the reſentment of the moſt injured of women. You 'have heard, you ſay, of the murder; but do you 'know the cauſe, Mr. Booth? have you, ſince your 'return to England, viſited that country where we 'formerly knew one another? tell me, do you know 'my wretched ſtory? tell me that, my friend.'

Booth heſitated for an anſwer; indeed he had heard ſome imperfect ſtories, not much to her advantage. She waited not till he had formed a ſpeech; but cried, 'Whatever you may have heard, you can-'not be acquainted with all the ſtrange accidents 'which have occaſioned your ſeeing me in a place, 'which, at our laſt parting, was ſo unlikely that I 'ſhould ever have been found in; nor can you know 'the cauſe of all that I have uttered, and which, I 'am convinced, you never expected to have heard 'from my mouth. If theſe circumſtances raiſe your 'curioſity, I will ſatisfy it.'

He anſwered, that curioſity, was too mean a word to expreſs his ardent deſire of knowing her ſtory. Upon which, with very little previous ceremony, ſhe began to relate what is written in the following chapter.

But before we put an end to this, it may be neceſſary to whiſper a word or two to the critics, who have, perhaps, begun to expreſs no leſs aſtoniſhment than Mr. Booth, that a lady, in whom we had remarked a moſt extraordinary power of diſplaying ſoftneſs, ſhould the very next moment after the words were out of our mouth, expreſs ſentiments becoming the lips of a Dalila, Jezebel, Medea, Semiramis, Paryſatis, Tanaquil, Livilla, Meſſalina, Agrippina, Brunichilde, Eltrida, lady Macbeth, Joan of Naples, Chriſtina of Sweden, Katharine Hays, Sarah Malcolm, Con. Philips *, or any other heroine of the tender ſex, which hiſtory, ſacred or prophane, antient or modern, falſe or true, hath recorded.

We deſire ſuch critics to remember, that it is the ſame Engliſh climate, in which, on the lovely 10th of June, under a ſerene ſky, the amorous Jacobite kiſſing

* Though laſt, not leaſt.

kiſſing the odoriferous zephyr's breath, gathers a noſegay of white roſes to deck the whiter breaſt of Celia; and in which, on the 11th of June, the very next day, the boiſterous boreas, rouſed by the hollow thunder, ruſhes horrible through the air, and driving the wet tempeſt before him, levels the hope of the huſbandman with the earth, dreadful remembrance of the conſequences of the revolution.

Again let it be remembered, that it is the ſelf ſame Celia, all tender, ſoft, and delicate; who with a voice, the ſweetneſs of which the Sirens might envy, warbles the harmonious ſong in praiſe of the young adventurer; and again, the next day, or, perhaps the next hour, with fiery eyes, wrinkled brows, and foaming lips, roars forth treaſon and nonſenſe in a political argument with ſome fair one, of a different principle.

Or, if the critic be a whig, and conſequently diſlikes ſuch kind of ſimiles, as being too favourable to jacobitiſm, let him be contented with the following ſtory:

I happened in my youth to ſit behind two ladies in a ſide-box at a play, where, in the balcony on the oppoſite ſide was placed the inimitable B——y C——s, in company with a young fellow of no very formal, or indeed ſober, appearance. One of the ladies, I remember, ſaid to the other—'Did you ever ſee any 'thing look ſo modeſt and ſo innocent as that girl 'over the way? what pity it is ſuch a creature ſhould 'be in the way of ruin, as I am afraid ſhe is, by her 'being alone with that young fellow!' Now this lady was no bad phyſiognomiſt; for it was impoſſible to conceive a greater appearance of modeſty, innocence, and ſimplicity, than what nature had diſplayed in the countenance of that girl; and yet, all appearances notwithſtanding, I myſelf (remember, critic, it was in my youth) had a few mornings before ſeen that very identical picture of all thoſe engaging qualities in bed with a rake at a bagnio, ſmoaking tobacco, drinking punch, talking obſcenity, and ſwearing and curſing with all the impudence and impiety of the loweſt and moſt abandoned trull of a ſoldier

CHAP. VII.

In which Miſs Matthews *begins her hiſtory.*

MISS Matthews having barred the door on the inſide, as ſecurely as it was before barred on the outſide, proceeded as follows:

'You may imagine, I am going to begin my 'hiſtory at the time when you left the country; but 'I cannot help reminding you of ſomething which 'happened before. You will ſoon recollect the inci- 'dent; but I believe you little know the conſequence 'either at that time or ſince. Alas! I could keep a 'ſecret then: now I have no ſecrets; the world 'knows all; and it is not worth my while to conceal 'any thing. Well!—You will not wonder, I be- 'lieve.—I proteſt I can hardly tell it you even 'now.——But I am convinced you have too good an 'opinion of yourſelf to be ſurpriſed at any conqueſt 'you may have made.——Few men want that good 'opinion—and perhaps very few had ever more rea- 'ſon for it. Indeed, Will, you was a charming fel- 'low in thoſe days; nay, you are not much altered 'for the worſe now, at leaſt in the opinion of ſome 'women: for your complexion and features are 'grown much more maſculine than they were.' Here Booth made her a low bow, moſt probably with a compliment; and after a little heſitation, ſhe again proceeded——'Do you remember a conteſt which 'happened at an aſſembly, betwixt myſelf and Miſs 'Johnſon, about ſtanding uppermoſt? you was then 'my partner; and young Williams danced with the 'other lady. The particulars are not now worth 'mentioning, though I ſuppoſe you have long ſince 'forgot them. Let it ſuffice that you ſupported my 'claim, and Williams very ſneakingly gave up that 'of his partner, who was with much difficulty, af- 'terwards prevailed to dance with him. You ſaid, '—I am ſure I repeat the words, exactly, that, 'you 'would not for the world affront any lady there; but 'that you thought you might, without any ſuch dan-

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'ger, declare that there was no aſſembly in which 'that lady, meaning your humble ſervant, was 'not worthy of the uppermoſt place; nor will 'I, ſaid you, ſuffer the firſt duke in England, 'when ſhe is at the uppermoſt end of the room, 'and hath called her dance to lead his partner 'above her.'

'What made this the more pleaſing to me was, 'that I ſecretly hated Miſs Johnſon. Will you 'have the reaſon? why then, I will tell you honeſtly, 'ſhe was my rival;——that word perhaps aſtoniſhes 'you, as you never, I believe, heard of any one who 'made his addreſſes to me; and indeed my heart 'was till that night, entirely indifferent to all man-'kind. I mean then, that ſhe was my rival for 'praiſe, for beauty, for dreſs, for fortune, and con-'ſequently for admiration. My triumph on this 'conqueſt is not to be expreſſed, any more than 'my delight in the perſon to whom I chiefly 'owed it. The former, I fancy, was viſible to 'the whole company; and I deſired it ſhould be 'ſo: but the latter was ſo well concealed, that 'no one, I am confident, took any notice of it. 'And yet you appeared to me that night to be an 'angel. You looked, you danced, you ſpoke—— 'every thing charmed me.

'Good heavens!' cries Booth, is it poſſible you 'ſhould do me ſo much unmerited honour, and 'I ſhould be dunce enough not to perceive the 'leaſt ſymptom!'

'I aſſure you,' anſwered ſhe, 'I did all I could 'to prevent you; and yet I almoſt hated you for 'not ſeeing through what I ſtrove to hide. Why, 'Mr. Booth, was you not more quick-ſighted?—— 'I will anſwer for you——your affections were more 'happily diſpoſed of to a much better woman than 'myſelf, whom you married ſoon afterwards. I 'ſhould aſk you for her, Mr. Booth; I ſhould 'have aſked you for her before; but I am un-'worthy of aſking for her, or of calling her my 'acquaintance.'

Booth ſtopped her ſhort, as ſhe was running into another fit of paſſion, and begged her to omit all former matters, and acquaint him with that part of her hiſtory to which he was an entire ſtranger.

She then renewed her diſcourſe as follows: 'You 'know, Mr. Booth, I ſoon afterwards left that 'town, upon the death of my grandmother, and 'returned home to my father's houſe; where I 'had not been long arrived before ſome troops of 'dragoons came to quarter in our neighbourhood. 'Among the officers, there was a cornet, whoſe 'deteſted name was Hebbers, a name I could ſcarce 'repeat, had I not at the ſame time the pleaſure to 'reflect that he is now no more. My father, you 'know, who was a hearty well-wiſher to the preſent 'government, uſed always to invite the officers to 'his houſe; ſo did he theſe. Nor was it long before 'this cornet, in ſo particular a manner recommend-'ed himſelf to the poor old gentleman (I cannot 'think of him without tears) that our houſe became 'his principal habitation; and he was rarely at his 'quarters, unleſs when his ſuperior officers obliged 'him to be there. I ſhall ſay nothing of his perſon, 'nor could that be any recommendation to a man; 'it was ſuch, however, as no woman could have 'made an objection to. Nature had certainly wrapt 'up her odious work in a moſt beautiful covering. 'To ſay the truth, he was the handſomeſt man, 'except one only, that I ever ſaw—I aſſure you, I 'have ſeen a handſomer——but—well.——He had 'beſides all the qualifications of a gentleman; was 'genteel, and extremely polite; ſpoke French well, 'and danced to a miracle; but what chiefly recom-'mended him to my father, was his ſkill in muſic, 'of which you know that dear man was the moſt 'violent lover. I wiſh he was not too ſuſceptible 'of flattery on that head; for I have heard Heb-'bers often greatly commend my father's perform-'ance, and have obſerved, that the good man 'was wonderfully pleaſed with ſuch commendations. 'To ſay the truth, it is the only way I can ac-'count for the extraordinary friendſhip which my

'father

'father conceived for this perſon; ſuch a friendſhip 'that he at leaſt became a part of our family.

'This very circumſtance, which, as I am con- 'vinced, ſtrongly recommended him to my father, 'had the very contrary effect with me; I had never 'any delight in muſic, and it was not without much 'difficulty I was prevailed on to learn to play on 'the harpſichord, in which I had made a very ſlen- 'der progreſs. As this man, therefore, was fre- 'quently the occaſion of my being importuned to 'play againſt my will, I began to entertain ſome 'diſlike for him on that account; and as to his perſon, 'I aſſure you, I long continued to look on it with 'great indifference.

'How ſtrange will the art of this man appear 'to you preſently, who had ſufficient addreſs to 'convert that very circumſtance which had at firſt 'occaſioned my diſlike, into the firſt ſeeds of affec- 'tion for him!

'You have often, I believe, heard my ſiſter Betty 'play on the harpſichord; ſhe was indeed reputed 'the beſt performer in the whole country.

'I was the fartheſt in the world from regarding 'this perfection of her's with envy. In reality, 'perhaps, I deſpiſed all perfection of this kind; 'at leaſt, as I had neither ſkill nor ambition to 'excel this way, I looked upon it as a matter of 'mere indifference.

'Hebbers firſt put this emulation in my head. 'He took great pains to perſuade me, that I had 'much greater abilities of the muſical kind than 'my ſiſter; and that I might with the greateſt 'eaſe, if I pleaſed, excel her; offering me, at the 'ſame time, his aſſiſtance, if I would reſolve to un- 'dertake it.

'When he had ſufficiently inflamed my ambition, 'in which perhaps he found too little difficulty, the 'continual praiſes of my ſiſter, which before I had 'diſregarded, became more and more nauſeous in 'my ears; and the rather as muſic being the favour- 'ite paſſion of my father, I became apprehenſive '(not without frequent hints from Hebbers of that

'nature) that ſhe might gain too great a preference 'in his favour.

'To my harpſichord then I applied myſelf night 'and day, with ſuch induſtry and attention, that 'I ſoon began to perform in a tolerable manner. I 'do not abſolutely ſay I excelled my ſiſter; for 'many were of a different opinion; but indeed 'there might be ſome partiality in all that.

'Hebbers, at leaſt, declared himſelf on my ſide, 'and nobody could doubt his judgment. He 'aſſerted openly, that I played in the better man-'ner of the two; and one day, when I was playing 'to him alone, he affected to burſt into a rapture 'of admiration, and, ſqueezing me gently by the 'hand, ſaid, There, madam, I now declare you ex-'cel your ſiſter as much in muſic as, added he, in a 'whiſpering ſigh, you do her and all the world, in 'every other charm.'

'No woman can bear any ſuperiorty in what-'ever thing ſhe deſires to excel in. I now began 'to hate all the admirers of my ſiſter, to be uneaſy 'at every commendation beſtowed on her ſkill in 'muſic, and conſequently to love Hebbers for the 'preference which he gave to mine.

'It was now that I began to ſurvey the hand-'ſome perſon of Hebbers with pleaſure. And here, 'Mr. Booth, I will betray to you the grand ſecret 'of our ſex.—Many women, I believe, do, with 'great innocence, and even with great indifference, 'converſe with men of the fineſt perſons; but this 'I am confident may be affirmed with truth, that, 'when a woman once comes to aſk this queſtion 'of herſelf; is the man whom I like for ſome 'other reaſon handſome? her fate, and his too, 'very ſtrongly depend on her anſwering in the 'affirmative.

'Hebbers no ſooner perceiveed that he made an 'impreſſion on my heart, of which, I am ſatisfied, 'I gave him too undeniable tokens, than he affect-'ed, on a ſudden, to ſhun me in the moſt apparent 'manner. He wore the moſt melancholy air in my 'preſence, and, by his dejected looks and ſighs,

'firmly

'firmly perſuaded me, that there was ſome ſecret 'ſorrow labouring in his boſom; nor will it be 'difficult for you to imagine to what cauſe I im-'puted it.

'Whilſt I was wiſhing for his declaration of a 'paſſion, in which, I thought, I could not be miſ-'taken, and, at the ſame time, trembling, whenever 'we met, with the apprehenſion of this very decla-'ration, the widow Carey came from London to 'make us a viſit, intending to ſtay the whole ſummer 'at our houſe.

'Thoſe, who know Mrs. Carey, will ſcarce think 'I do her an injury, in ſaying, ſhe is far from be-'ing handſome; and yet ſhe is as finiſhed a co-'quette as if ſhe had the higheſt beauty to ſupport 'that character. But, perhaps, you have ſeen her; 'and, if you have, I am convinced you will readily 'ſubſcribe to my opinion.'

Booth anſwered, he had not; and then ſhe pro-ceeded as in the following chapter:

CHAP. VIII.

The hiſtory of Miſs Matthews *continued.*

'THIS young lady had not been three days 'with us, before Hebbers grew ſo particular 'with her, that it was generally obſerved, and my 'poor father, who, I believe, loved the cornet as 'if he had been his ſon, began to jeſt on the oc-'caſion, as one who would not be diſpleaſed at 'throwing a good jointure into the arms of his 'friend.

'You will eaſily gueſs, ſir, the diſpoſition of my 'mind on this occaſion; but I was not permitted 'to ſuffer long under it; for one day, when Heb-'bers was alone with me, he took an opportunity 'of expreſſing his abhorrence at the thoughts of 'marrying for intereſt, contrary to his inclinations. 'I was warm on the ſubject, and I believe, went ſo 'far as to ſay, that none but fools and villains did ſo. 'He replied, with a ſigh, yes, madam, but what 'would you think of a man whoſe heart is all the

'while bleeding for another woman, to whom he 'would willingly ſacrifice the world; but, becauſe 'he muſt ſacrifice her intereſt as well as his own, 'never durſt even give her a hint of that paſſion 'which was preying on his very vitals? do you 'believe, Miſs Fanny, there is ſuch a wretch on 'earth? I anſwered, with an aſſumed coldneſs, I 'did not believe there was. He then took me 'gently by the hand, and with a look ſo tender, 'that I cannot deſcribe it, vowed he was himſelf 'that wretch. Then ſtarting, as if conſcious of an 'error committed, he cried with a faltering voice, 'what am I ſaying? pardon me, Miſs Fanny; ſince 'I beg only your pity, I never will aſk for more.— 'At theſe words, hearing my father coming up, I 'betrayed myſelf entirely, if, indeed, I had not 'done it before. I haſtily withdrew my hand, 'crying, huſh! for heaven's ſake, my father is juſt 'coming in; my bluſhes, my look, and my accent 'telling him, I ſuppoſe, all which he wiſhed to 'know.

'A few days now brought matters to an eclair-'ciſſement between us; the being undeceived in 'what had given me ſo much uneaſineſs, gave me 'a pleaſure too ſweet to be reſiſted. To triumph 'over the widow, for whom I had, in a very ſhort 'time, contracted a moſt inveterate hatred, was a 'pride not to be deſcribed. Hebbers appeared to 'me to be the cauſe of all this happineſs. I doubted 'not but that he had the moſt diſintereſted paſſion for 'me, and thought him every way worthy of its 'return. I did return it, and accepted him as my 'lover.

'He declared the greateſt apprehenſions of my 'father's ſuſpicion, though I am convinced theſe 'were cauſeleſs, had his deſigns been honourable: 'To blind theſe, I conſented that he ſhould carry 'on ſham addreſſes to the widow, who was now 'a conſtant jeſt between us; and he pretended, 'from time to time, to acquaint me faithfully with 'every thing that paſſed at his interviews with her; 'nor was this faithleſs woman wanting in her part

of

'of the deceit. She carried herſelf to me all the 'while with a ſhew of affection, and pretended to 'have the utmoſt friendſhip for me. But ſuch are 'the friendſhips of women!'

At this remark, Booth, though enough affected at ſome parts of the ſtory, had great difficulty to refrain from laughter; but, by good luck, he eſcaped being perceived; and the lady went on without interruption.

'I am come now to a part of my narrative in 'which it is impoſſible to be particular, without 'being tedious; for as to the commerce between 'lovers, it is, I believe, much the ſame in all caſes, 'and there is, perhaps, ſcarce a ſingle phraſe that 'hath not been repeated ten millions of times.

'One thing, however, as I ſtrongly remarked it 'then, ſo I will repeat it to you now. In all our 'converſations, in moments when he fell into the 'warmeſt raptures, and expreſſed the greateſt un-'eaſineſs at the delay of his joys, he ſeldom men-'tioned the word marriage; and never once ſoli-'cited a day for that purpoſe. Indeed women 'cannot be cautioned too much againſt ſuch lovers; 'for though I have heard, and perhaps truly, of 'ſome of our ſex of a virtue ſo exalted, that it is 'proof againſt every temptation; yet the generality, 'I am afraid, are too much in the power of a man 'to whom they have owned an affection. What is 'called being upon a good footing, is, perhaps, be-'ing upon a very dangerous one; and a woman who 'hath given her conſent to marry, can hardly be ſaid 'to be ſafe till ſhe is married.

'And now, ſir, I haſten to the period of my 'ruin. We had a wedding in our family; my 'muſical ſiſter was married to a young fellow as 'muſical as herſelf. Such a match, you may be 'ſure, amongſt other feſtivities, muſt have a ball. 'Oh! Mr. Booth, ſhall modeſty forbid me to re-'mark to you what paſſed on that occaſion? but why 'do I mention modeſty, who have no pretenſions 'to it? every thing was ſaid, and practiſed, on 'that occaſion, as if the purpoſe had been to in-

'flame the mind of every woman preſent. That 'effect, I freely own to you, it had with me. Mu'ſic, dancing, wine, and the moſt luſcious conver'ſation, in which my poor dear father innocently 'joined, raiſed ideas in me of which I ſhall for 'ever repent; and I wiſhed (why ſhould I deny 'it?) that it had been my wedding, inſtead of my 'ſiſter's.

'The villain Hebbers danced with me that night, 'and he loſt no opportunity of improving the oc'caſion. In ſhort, the dreadful evening came. 'My father, though it was a very unuſual thing 'with him, grew intoxicated with liquor; moſt of 'the men were in the ſame condition; nay, I my'ſelf drank more than I was accuſtomed to, enough 'to inflame, though not to diſorder. I loſt my 'former bed-fellow, my ſiſter, and—you may, I 'think, gueſs the reſt—the villain found means to 'ſteal to my chamber, and I was undone.

'Two months I paſſed in this deteſted commerce, 'buying, even then, my guilty, half taſted plea'ſures at too dear a rate, with continual horror and 'apprehenſion; but what have I paid ſince, what 'do I pay now, Mr. Booth? O may my fate be a 'warning to every woman to keep her innocence, 'to reſiſt every temptation, ſince ſhe is certain to 'repent of the fooliſh bargain. May it be a warn'ing to her to deal with mankind with care and 'caution; to ſhun the leaſt approaches of diſho'nour, and never to confide too much in the ho'neſty of a man, nor in her own ſtrength, where 'ſhe has ſo much at ſtake; let her remember ſhe 'walks on a precipice, and the bottomleſs pit is to 'receive her, if ſhe ſlips; nay, if ſhe makes but 'one falſe ſtep.

'I aſk your pardon, Mr. Booth, I might have 'ſpared theſe exhortations, ſince no woman hears 'me; but you will not wonder at ſeeing me affected 'on this occaſion.'

Booth declared he was much more ſurpriſed at her being able ſo well to preſerve her temper in recounting her ſtory.

'O

'O ſir, anſwered ſhe, I am at length reconciled 'to my fate; and I can now die with pleaſure, 'ſince I die revenged. I am not one of thoſe mean 'wretches who can ſit down and lament their mis-'fortunes. If I ever ſhed tears, they are the tears 'of indignation—but I will proceed.

'It was my fate now to ſolicit marriage; and I 'failed not to do it in the moſt earneſt manner. 'He anſwered me at firſt with procraſtinations, de-'claring, from time to time, he would mention it 'to my father, and ſtill excuſing himſelf for not 'doing it. At laſt he thought on an expedient to 'obtain a longer reprieve. This was by pretend-'ing that he ſhould, in a very few weeks, be pre-'ferred to the command of a troop; and then, he 'ſaid, he could, with ſome confidence, propoſe the 'match.

'In this delay, I was perſuaded to acquieſce; 'and was indeed pretty eaſy; for I had not yet the 'leaſt miſtruſt of his honour; but what words can 'paint my ſenſations! when one morning he came 'into my room, with all the marks of dejection in 'his countenance, and throwing an open letter on 'the table, ſaid, there is news, madam, in that 'letter, which I am unable to tell you; nor can it 'give you more concern than it hath given me.

'This letter was from his captain, to acquaint 'him, that the rout, as they call it, was arrived, 'and that they were to march within two days. 'And this, I am ſince convinced, was what he ex-'pected, inſtead of the preferment which had been 'made the pretence of delaying our marriage.

'The ſhock which I felt at reading this was in-'expreſſible, occaſioned indeed principally by the 'departure of a villain whom I loved. However, 'I ſoon acquired ſufficient preſence of mind to re-'member the main point; and I now inſiſted pe-'remptorily on his making me immediately his wife, 'whatever might be the conſequence.

'He ſeemed thunderſtruck at this propoſal, be-'ing, I ſuppoſe, deſtitute of any excuſe: but I was 'too impatient to wait for an anſwer, and cried out

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'with much eagerneſs, ſure you cannot heſitate a 'moment upon this matter——heſitate! madam! 'replied he—what you aſk is impoſſible—is this a 'time for me to mention a thing of this kind to 'your father?—my eyes were now opened all at 'once—I fell into a rage little ſhort of madneſs. 'Tell not me, I cried, of impoſſibilities, nor times, 'nor of my father——my honour, my reputation, 'my all are at ſtake.——I will have no excuſe, no 'delay——make me your wife this inſtant, or I 'will proclaim you over the face of the whole earth 'for the greateſt of villains.—He anſwered, with 'a kind of ſneer, What will you proclaim, madam?— 'whoſe honour will you injure? My tongue faltered 'when I offered to reply, and I fell into a violent 'agony, which ended in a fit; nor do I remember 'any thing more that paſſed, till I found myſelf in 'the arms of my poor affrighted father.

'O, Mr. Booth! what was then my ſituation. 'I tremble even now from the reflection.—I muſt 'ſtop a moment. I can go no farther.' Booth attempted all in his power to ſoothe her; and ſhe ſoon recovered her powers, and proceeded in her ſtory.

CHAP. IX.

In which Miſs Matthews *concludes her relation.*

'BEFORE I had recovered my ſenſes, I had 'ſufficiently betrayed myſelf to the beſt of 'men, who inſtead of upbraiding me, or exerting 'any anger, endeavoured to comfort me all he 'could, with aſſurances that all ſhould yet be well. 'This goodneſs of his affected me with inexpreſſible ſenſations; I proſtrated myſelf before him, 'embraced and kiſſed his knees, and almoſt diſſolved in tears, and a degree of tenderneſs hardly 'to be conceived—But I am running into too minute deſcriptions.

'Hebbers, ſeeing me in a fit, had left me, and 'ſent one of the ſervants to take care of me. He 'then ran away like a thief from the houſe, with-

'out

'out taking his leave of my father, or once thanking him for all his civilities. He did not ſtop at 'his quarters, but made directly to London, apprehenſive, I believe, either of my father or brother's 'reſentment; for I am convinced he is a coward. 'Indeed his fear of my brother was utterly groundleſs; for I believe, he would rather have thanked 'any man who had deſtroyed me; and I am ſure I 'am not in the leaſt behind hand with him in good 'wiſhes.

'All his inveteracy to me, had, however, no effect on my father, at leaſt at that time; for 'though the good man took ſufficient occaſions to 'reprimand me for my paſt offence, he could not 'be brought to abandon me. A treaty of marriage was now ſet on foot, in which my father 'himſelf offered me to Hebbers, with a fortune 'ſuperior to that which had been given with my 'ſiſter; nor could all my brother's remonſtrances 'againſt it, as an act of the higheſt injuſtice, avail.

'Hebbers entered into the treaty, though not 'with much warmth. He had even the aſſurance 'to make additional demands on my father, which 'being complied with, every thing was concluded, 'and the villain once more received into the houſe. 'He ſoon found means to obtain my forgiveneſs 'of his former behaviour; indeed he convinced 'me, ſo fooliſhly blind is female love, that he had 'never been to blame.

'When every thing was ready for our nuptials, 'and the day of the ceremony was to be appointed, 'in the midſt of my happineſs, I received a letter 'from an unknown hand, acquainting me (gueſs, 'Mr. Booth, how I was ſhocked at receiving it) 'that Mr. Hebbers was already married to a woman, 'in a diſtant part of the kingdom.

'I will not tire you with all that paſſed at our next 'interview. I communicated the letter to Hebbers, who, after ſome little heſitation, owned the 'fact; and not only owned it, but had the addreſs 'to improve it to his own advantage, to make it 'the means of ſatisfying me concerning all his for-

'mer

'mer delays; which, to ſay the truth, I was not 'ſo much diſpleaſed at imputing to any degree of 'villainy, as I ſhould have been to impute it to the 'want of a ſufficient warmth of affection; and 'though the diſappointment of all my hopes, at 'the very inſtant of their expected fruition, threw 'me into the moſt violent diſorders; yet when I 'came a little to myſelf, he had no great difficulty 'to perſuade me that in every inſtance, with regard 'to me, Hebbers had acted from no other motive 'than from the moſt ardent and ungovernable love. 'And there is, I believe, no crime which a woman 'will not forgive, when ſhe can derive it from that 'fountain. In ſhort, I forgave him all, and am 'willing to perſuade myſelf I am not weaker than 'the reſt of my ſex. Indeed, Mr. Booth, he hath 'a bewitching tongue, and is maſter of an addreſs 'that no woman could reſiſt. I do aſſure you the 'charms of his perſon are his leaſt perfection, at 'leaſt in my eye.'

Here Booth ſmiled, but happily without her perceiving it.

'A freſh difficulty (continued ſhe) now aroſe. 'This was to excuſe the delay of the ceremony to 'my father, who every day very earneſtly urged it. 'This made me ſo very uneaſy, that I at laſt liſtened 'to a propoſal, which if any one, in the days of 'my innocence, or even a few days before, had 'aſſured me I could have ſubmitted to have thought 'of, I ſhould have treated the ſuppoſition with the 'higheſt contempt and indignation; nay, I ſcarce 'reflect on it now with more horror than aſtoniſhment. 'In ſhort, I agreed to run away with him. To 'leave my father, my reputation, every thing which 'was or ought to have been dear to me, and to 'live with this villain as a miſtreſs, ſince I could not 'be his wife.

'Was not this an obligation of the higheſt and 'tendereſt kind, and had I not reaſon to expect 'every return in the man's power on whom I had 'conferred it.

'I will

'I will make ſhort of the remainder of my ſtory: 'for what is there of a woman worth relating, after 'what I have told you?

'Above a year I lived with this man in an obſcure 'court in London, during which time I had a child 'by him, whom Heaven, I thank it, hath been 'pleaſed to take to itſelf.

'During many months he behaved to me with 'all the apparent tenderneſs, and even fondneſs im-'aginable; but, alas! how poor was my enjoyment 'of this, compared to what it would have been in 'another ſituation? when he was preſent, life was 'barely tolerable; but when he was abſent, nothing 'could equal the miſery I endured. I paſt my 'hours almoſt entirely alone: for no company, but 'what I deſpiſed, would conſort with me. Abroad, 'I ſcarce ever went, leſt I ſhould meet any of my 'former acquaintance; for their ſight would have 'plunged a thouſand daggers in my ſoul. My 'only diverſion was going very ſeldom to a play, 'where I hid myſelf in the gallery, with a daughter 'of the woman of the houſe. A girl indeed of good 'ſenſe, and many good qualities: but how much 'beneath me was it to be the companion of a creature 'ſo low! O heavens! when I have ſeen my equals 'glittering in a ſide-box, how have the thoughts of 'my loſt honour torn my ſoul!'

'Pardon me, dear madam,' cries Booth, 'for in-'terrupting you; but I am under the utmoſt anxiety 'to know what became of your poor father, for 'whom I have ſo great a reſpect, and who, I am 'convinced, muſt ſo bitterly feel your loſs.'

'O Mr. Booth,' anſwered ſhe, 'he was ſcarce 'ever out of my thoughts. His dear image ſtill ob-'truded itſelf, in my mind, and I believe would 'have broken my heart, had I not taken a very 'prepoſterous way to eaſe myſelf. I am indeed al-'moſt aſhamed to tell you; but neceſſity put it in 'my head.—You will think the matter too trifling 'to have been remembered, and ſo it ſurely was; 'nor ſhould I have remembered it on any other oc-'caſion. You muſt know then, ſir, that my bro-

'ther

'ther was always my inveterate enemy, and alto-
'gether as fond of my ſiſter. He once prevailed
'with my father to let him take my ſiſter with him
'in the chariot, and by that means I was diſap-
'pointed of going to a ball which I had ſet my
'heart on. The diſappointment, I aſſure you, was
'great at the time; but I had long ſince forgotten
'it. I muſt have been a very bad woman if I
'had not: for it was the only thing in which I can
'remember that my father ever diſobliged me.
'However, I now revived this in my mind, which I
'artificially worked up into ſo high an injury, that
'I aſſure you it afforded me no little comfort.
'When any tender idea intruded into my boſom,
'I immediately raiſed this fantome of an injury, in
'my imagination, and it conſiderably leſſened the
'fury of that ſorrow which I ſhould have other-
'wiſe felt for the loſs of ſo good a father: who
'died within a few months of my departure from
'him.

'And now, ſir, to draw to a concluſion. One
'night as I was in the gallery at Drury-Lane play-
'houſe, I ſaw below me, in a ſide-box——(ſhe
'was once below me in every place) that widow
'whom I mentioned to you before——I had ſcarce
'caſt my eyes on this woman, before I was ſo
'ſhocked with the ſight, that it almoſt deprived
'me of my ſenſes; for the villain Hebbers came
'preſently in, and ſeated himſelf behind her.

'He had been almoſt a month from me, and I
'believed him to be at his quarters in Yorkſhire.
'Gueſs what were my ſenſations, when I beheld
'him ſitting by that baſe woman, and talking to
'her with the utmoſt familiarity. I could not long
'endure this ſight; and having acquainted my
'companion that I was taken ſuddenly ill, I forced
'her to go home with me at the end of the ſecond
'act.

'After a reſtleſs and ſleepleſs night, when I roſe
'the next morning I had the comfort to receive a
'viſit from the woman of the houſe, who, after a
'very ſhort introduction, aſked me when I had
heard

'heard from the captain, and when I expected to 'see him? I had not ſtrength or ſpirits to make 'her any anſwer; and ſhe proceeded thus: indeed 'I did not think the captain would have uſed me 'ſo. My huſband was an officer of the army, as 'well as himſelf; and if a body is a little low in 'the world, I am ſure that is no reaſon for folks to 'trample on a body. I defy the world to ſay as I 'ever was guilty of an ill thing. For heaven's 'ſake, madam, ſays I, what do you mean! Mean! 'cries ſhe, I am ſure if I had not thought you had 'been captain Hebber's lady, his lawful lady too, 'you ſhould never have ſet footing in my houſe. I 'would have captain Hebbers know, that though 'I am reduced to let lodgings, I never have enter-'tained any but perſons of character.—In this man-'ner, ſir, ſhe ran on, ſaying many ſhocking things 'not worth repeating, till my anger at laſt got the 'better of my patience as well as my ſorrow, and I 'puſhed her out of the room.

'She had not been long gone before her daugh-'ter came to me, and after many expreſſions of 'tenderneſs and pity acquainted me, that her mo-'ther had juſt found out, by means of the captain's 'ſervant, that the captain was married to another 'lady; which if you did not know before, madam, 'ſaid ſhe, I am ſorry to be the meſſenger of ſuch ill 'news.

'Think, Mr. Booth, what I muſt have endured 'to ſee myſelf humbled before ſuch a creature as 'this, the daughter of a woman who lets lodgings! 'however, having recollected myſelf a little, I 'thought it would be in vain to deny any thing; ſo 'knowing this to be one of the beſt natured, and 'moſt ſenſible girls in the world, I reſolved to tell 'her my whole ſtory, and for the future to make her 'my confidante. I anſwered her, therefore, with a 'good deal of aſſurance, that ſhe need not regret 'telling me this piece of ill news, for I had known 'it before I came to her houſe.

'Pardon me, madam, replied the girl, you can-'not poſſibly have known it ſo long; for he hath

'not

'not been married above a week: laſt night was the 'firſt time of his appearing in public with his wife at 'the play. Indeed, I knew very well the cauſe of 'your uneaſineſs there; but would not mention—

'His wife at the play! anſwered I eagerly: what 'wife! whom do you mean?'

'I mean the widow Carey, madam, replied ſhe, to 'whom the captain was married a few days ſince. 'His ſervant was here laſt night to pay for your 'lodging; and he told it my mother.

'I know not what anſwer I made, or whether I 'made any; I preſently fell dead on the floor, and 'it was with great difficulty I was brought back to 'life by the poor girl: for neither the mother, nor 'the maid of the houſe, would lend me any aſſiſtance, 'both ſeeming to regard me rather as a monſter than 'a woman.

'Scarce had I recovered the uſe of my ſenſes, when 'I received a letter from the villain, declaring he 'had not aſſurance to ſee my face, and very kindly 'adviſing me to endeavour to recohcile myſelf to my 'family; concluding with an offer, in caſe I did not 'ſucceed, to allow me twenty pounds a year to ſup-'port me in ſome remote part of the kingdom.

'I need not mention my indignation at theſe pro-'poſals. In the higheſt agony of rage, I went in 'a chair to the deteſted houſe, where I eaſily got 'acceſs to the wretch I had devoted to deſtruction, 'whom I no ſooner found within my reach, than I 'plunged a drawn penknife, which I had prepared 'in my pocket for the purpoſe, into his accurſed 'heart. For this fact I was immediately ſeized, and 'ſoon after committed hither; and for this fact I am 'ready to die, and ſhall, with pleaſure, receive the 'ſentence of the law.'

'Thus, ſir,' ſaid ſhe, 'I have related to you my 'unhappy ſtory; and if I have tired your patience, 'by dwelling too long on thoſe parts which affected 'me the moſt, I aſk your pardon.'

Booth made a proper ſpeech on this occaſion, and having expreſſed much concern at her preſent ſituation,

ſituation, concluded that he hoped her ſentence would be milder than ſhe ſeemed to expect.

Her reply to this was full of ſo much bitterneſs and indignation, that we do not think proper to record the ſpeech at length; in which, having vented her paſſion, ſhe all at once put on a ſerene countenance, and with an air of great complacency, ſaid, 'Well, Mr. Booth, I think I have now a right to 'ſatisfy my curioſity, at the expence of your breath. 'I may ſay it is not altogether a vain curioſity: for 'perhaps I have had inclination enough to intereſt 'myſelf in whatever concerns you;—but no matter 'for that—thoſe days (added ſhe with a ſigh) are 'now over.'

Booth, who was extremely good-natured and well bred, told her that ſhe ſhould not command him twice whatever was in his power; and then, after the uſual apology, was going to begin his hiſtory, when the keeper arrived, and acquainted the lady that dinner was ready, at the ſame time ſaying, 'I ſuppoſe, ma-'dam, as the gentleman is an acquaintance of yours, 'he muſt dine with us too.'

Miſs Matthews told the keeper that ſhe had only one word to mention in private to the gentleman, and that then they would both attend him.—She then pulled her purſe from her pocket, in which were upwards of twenty guineas, being the remainder of the money for which ſhe had ſold a gold repeating watch, her father's preſent, with ſome other trinkets, and deſired Mr. Booth to take what he ſhould have occaſion for;—ſaying, 'You know, I 'believe, dear Will, I never valued money; and 'now I am ſure I ſhall have very little uſe for it.' Booth, with much difficulty, accepted of two guineas; and then they both together attended the keeper.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Table talk, conſiſting of a facetious diſcourſe that paſſed in the priſon.

THERE were aſſembled at the table the governor of theſe (not improperly called infernal) regions; the lieutenant governor, vulgarly named the firſt turnkey; Miſs Matthews, Mr. Booth, Mr. Robinſon the gambler, ſeveral other priſoners of both ſexes, and one Murphy, an attorney.

The governor took the firſt opportunity to bring the affair of Miſs Matthews upon the carpet, and then turning to Murphy, he ſaid, 'it is very lucky 'this gentleman happens to be preſent; I do aſſure 'you, madam, your cauſe cannot be in abler hands. 'He is, I believe, the beſt man in England at a de'fence; I have known him often ſucceed againſt the 'moſt poſitive evidence.'

'Fy, ſir,' anſwered Murphy, 'you know I hate 'all this; but if the lady will truſt me with her 'cauſe, I will do the beſt in my power. Come, ma'dam, do not be diſcouraged; a bit of manſlaughter 'and cold iron, I hope, will be the worſt: or per'haps we may come off better, with a ſlice of chance'medley, or *ſe defendendo*.'

'I am very ignorant of the law, ſir,' cries the lady.

'Yes, madam,' anſwered Murphy, 'it cannot 'be expected you ſhould underſtand it. There are 'very few of us who profeſs it, that underſtand the 'whole;—nor is it neceſſary we ſhould. There is a 'great deal of rubbiſh of little uſe about indictments 'and abatements, and bars, and ejectments, and 'trovers, and ſuch ſtuff, with which people cram 'their heads to little purpoſe. The chapter of evi'dence is the main buſineſs; that is the ſheet-anchor: 'that is the rudder, which brings the veſſel ſafe in 'Portum. Evidence is indeed the whole, the *ſumma 'totidis*, for *de non apparentibus et non inſiſtentibus eandem eſt ratio*.'

'If you addreſs yourſelf to me, ſir,' ſaid the lady, 'you are much too learned, I aſſure you, for my underſtanding.'

'*Face*, madam,' anſwered Murphy, 'is Latin for a candle: I commend your prudence. I ſhall know the particulars of your caſe when we are alone.'

'I hope the lady,' ſaid Robinſon, 'hath no ſuſpicion of any perſon here. I hope we are all perſons of honour at this table.'

'D—n my eyes!' anſwered a well-dreſſed woman, 'I can anſwer for myſelf and the other ladies; though I never ſaw the lady in my life, ſhe need not be ſhy of us, d—n my eyes; I ſcorn to rap* againſt any lady.'

'D—n me, madam!' cried another female, 'I honour what you have done. I once put a knife into a cull myſelf—ſo my ſervice, to you, madam; and I wiſh you may come off with *ſe diffidendo*, with all my heart.'

'I beg, good woman,' ſaid Miſs Matthews, 'you would talk on ſome other ſubject, and give yourſelf no concern about my affairs.'

'You ſee, ladies,' cried Murphy, 'the gentlewoman doth not care to talk on this matter before company; ſo pray do not preſs her.'

'Nay, I value the lady's acquaintance no more than ſhe values mine,' cries the firſt woman who ſpoke——'I have kept as good company as the lady, I believe, every day in the week. Good woman! I do not uſe to be ſo treated—If the lady ſays ſuch another word to me, d—n me, I will darken her day-lights. Marry come up, good woman!—the lady's a whore as well as myſelf; and though I am ſent hither to mill doll, d—n my eyes, I have money enough to buy it off, as well as the lady herſelf.'

Action might perhaps ſoon have enſued this ſpeech, had not the keeper interpoſed his authority, and put an end to any further diſpute. Soon after which, the company broke up; and none but himſelf,

* A cant word, meaning to ſwear, or rather to perjure yourſelf.

ſelf, Mr. Murphy, Captain Booth, and Miſs Matthews remained together.

Miſs Matthews then, at the entreaty of the keeper, began to open her caſe to Mr. Murphy, whom ſhe admitted to be her ſollicitor, though ſhe ſtill declared ſhe was indifferent as to the event of the trial.

Mr. Murphy having heard all the particulars with which the reader is already acquainted (as far as related to the murder) ſhook his head, and ſaid, 'There is but one circumſtance, madam, which I 'wiſh was out of the caſe; and that we muſt put 'out of it: I mean the carrying the penknife drawn 'into the room with you; for that ſeems to imply 'malice prepenſive, as we call it in the law: this 'circumſtance therefore muſt not appear againſt you; 'and if the ſervant who was in the room obſerved 'this, he muſt be bought off at all hazards. All 'here, you ſay, are friends; therefore I tell you 'openly, you muſt furniſh me with money ſufficient 'for this purpoſe. Malice is all we have to guard 'againſt.

'I would not preſume, ſir,' cries Booth, 'to in-'inform you in the Law; but I have heard in caſe of 'ſtabbing, a man may be indicted upon the ſta-'tute; and it is capital, though no malice ap-'pears.

'You ſay true, ſir,' anſwered Murphy, 'a man may 'be indicted *contra formam ſtatutis*; and that me-'thod, I allow you, requires no malice; I preſume 'you are a lawyer, ſir?'

'No, indeed, ſir,' anſwered Booth, 'I know no-'thing of the law.

'Then, ſir, I will tell you—if a man be indicted '*contra formam ſtatutis*, as we ſay, no malice is neceſ-'ſary; becauſe the form of the ſtatute makes ma-'lice; and then what we have to guard againſt is 'having ſtruck the firſt blow—pox on't, it is unlucky 'this was done in a room—If it had been in the 'ſtreet, we could have had five or ſix witneſſes to 'have proved the firſt blow, cheaper than I am afraid 'we ſhall get this one; for when a man knows, from 'the unhappy circumſtances of the caſe, that you

'can

'can procure no other witneſs but himſelf, he is al-
'ways dear. It is ſo in all other ways of buſineſs
'—I am very implicit, you ſee; but we are all
'among friends. The ſafeſt way is to furniſh me
'with money enough to offer him a good round ſum
'at once; and, I think (it is for your good I ſpeak)
'fifty pounds is the leaſt that can be offered him.—
'I do aſſure you, I would offer him no leſs, was it my
'own caſe.'

'And do you think, ſir,' ſaid ſhe, 'that I would
'ſave my life at the expence of hiring another to
'perjure himſelf?

'Ay, ſurely do I,' cries Murphy, 'for where is the
'fault, admitting there is ſome fault in perjury, as
'you call it; and to be ſure, it is ſuch a matter, as
'every man would rather wiſh to avoid than not;
'and yet, as it may be managed, there is not ſo much
'as ſome people are apt to imagine in it; for he
'need not kiſs the book, and then pray where is the
'perjury? but, if the crier is ſharper than ordinary,
'what is it he kiſſes? is it any thing but a bit of
'calves-ſkin? I am ſure a man muſt be a very bad
'chriſtian himſelf, who would not do ſo much as
'that to ſave the life of any chriſtian whatever, much
'more of ſo pretty a lady——Indeed, madam, if we
'can make out but a tolerable caſe, ſo much beauty
'will go a great way with the judge and the jury
'too.'

The latter part of this ſpeech, notwithſtanding the mouth it came from, cauſed Miſs Matthews to ſuppreſs much of the indignation which began to ariſe at the former; and ſhe anſwered with a ſmile, 'Sir,
'you are a great caſuiſt in theſe matters; but we
'need argue no longer concerning them; for if fifty
'pounds would ſave my life, I aſſure you I could not
'command that ſum. The little money I have in
'my pocket is all I can call my own; and, I appre-
'hend, in the ſituation I am in, I ſhall have very lit-
'tle of that to ſpare.'

'Come, come, madam,' cries Murphy, 'life is
'ſweet, let me tell you, and never ſweeter than
'when we are near loſing it. I have known many a

'man very brave and undaunted at his firſt commit-
'ment, who, when buſineſs began to thicken a little
'upon him, hath changed his note. It is no time to
'be ſaving in your condition.'

The keeper, who, after the liberality of Miſs Matthews, and on ſeeing a purſe of guineas in her hand, had conceived a great opinion of her wealth, no ſooner heard that the ſum which he had in intention entirely confiſcated for his own uſe, was attempted to be broke in upon, thought it high time to be upon his guard. 'To be ſure,' cries he, 'Mr. Murphy, life is ſweet
'as you ſay, that muſt be acknowledged; to be ſure
'life is ſweet; but ſweet as it is, no perſons can ad-
'vance more than they are worth to ſave it. And
'indeed, if the lady can command no more money
'than that little ſhe mentions, ſhe is to be com-
'mended for her unwillingneſs to part with any of it;
'for, to be ſure, as ſhe ſays, ſhe will want every far-
'thing of that, to live like a gentlewoman till ſhe
'comes to her trial. And, to be ſure, as ſweet as
'life is, people ought to take care to be able to live
'ſweetly while they do live: beſides, I cannot help
'ſaying, the lady ſhows herſelf to be what ſhe is, by
'her abhorrence of perjury, which is certainly a very
'dreadful crime. And, though the not kiſſing the
'book, doth, as you ſay, make a great deal of dif-
'ference; and, if a man had a great while to live
'and repent, perhaps he might ſwallow it well
'enough; yet, when people comes to be near their
'end (as who can venture to foretell what will be
'the lady's caſe!) they ought to take care not to
'over-burthen their conſcience. I hope the lady's
'caſe will not be found murder; for I am ſure I
'always wiſh well to all my priſoners, who ſhow
'themſelves to be gentlemen, or gentlewomen; yet
'one ſhould always fear the worſt.'

'Indeed, ſir, you ſpeak like an oracle,' anſwered the lady; and one ſubornation of perjury 'would ſit heavier on my conſcience, than twenty 'ſuch murders as I am guilty of.'

'Nay, to be ſure, madam,' anſwered the keeper, 'nobody can pretend to tell what provocation you

'muſt

'muſt have had; and certainly, it can never be imagined, that a lady who behaves herſelf ſo handſomely as you have done ever ſince you have been under my keys, ſhould be guilty of killing a man without being very highly provoked to do it.'

Mr. Murphy was, I believe, going to anſwer, when he was called out of the room; after which, nothing paſſed between the remaining perſons worth relating, till Booth and the lady retired back again into the lady's apartment.

Here they fell immediately to commenting on the foregoing diſcourſe; but as their comments were, I believe, the ſame with what moſt readers have made on the ſame occaſion, we ſhall omit them. At laſt Miſs Matthews reminding her companion of his promiſe of relating to her what had befallen him ſince the interruption of their former acquaintance, he began, as is written in the next book of this hiſtory.

AMELIA.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

In which Captain Booth *begins to relate his history.*

THE tea-table being removed, and Mr. Booth and the lady left alone, he proceeded as follows:

'Since you desire, madam, to know the particulars of my courtship to that best and dearest of women, whom I afterwards married; I will endeavour to recollect them as well as I can, at least all those incidents which are most worth relating to you.

'If the vulgar opinion of the fatality in marriage had ever any foundation, it surely appeared in my marriage with my Amelia. I knew her in the first dawn of her beauty; and, I believe, madam, she had as much as ever fell to the share of a woman; but though I always admired her, it was long without any spark of love. Perhaps the general admiration which at that time pursued her, the respect paid her by persons of the highest rank, and the numberless addresses which were made her by men of great fortune, prevented my aspiring at the possession of those charms, which seemed so absolutely out of my reach. However it was, I assure you, the accident which deprived her of the admiration of others, made the first great impression on my heart in her favour. The injury done to her beauty by the overturning of a chaise, by which,

'as

'as you may well remember, her lovely noſe was 'beat all to pieces, gave me an aſſurance that the 'woman who had been ſo much adored for the 'charms of her perſon, deſerved a much higher 'adoration to be paid to her mind; for that ſhe 'was in the latter reſpect infinitely more ſuperior to 'the reſt of her ſex, than ſhe had ever been in the 'former.

'I admire your taſte extremely,' cried the lady. 'I 'remember perfectly well the great heroiſm with 'which your Amelia bore that misfortune.'

'Good heavens! madam,' anſwered he, 'what a 'magnanimity of mind did her behaviour demon-'ſtrate! if the world have extolled the firmneſs of 'ſoul in a man who can ſupport the loſs of fortune; 'of a general, who can be compoſed after the loſs of 'a victory; or of a king, who can be contented 'with the loſs of a crown; with what aſtoniſhment 'ought we to behold, with what praiſes to honour a 'young lady, who can, with patience and reſignation, 'ſubmit to the loſs of exquiſite beauty, in other 'words, to the loſs of fortune, power, glory, every 'thing which human nature is apt to court and re-'joice in! what muſt be the mind, which can bear to 'be deprived of all theſe in a moment, and by an 'unfortunate trifling accident; which could ſupport 'all this, together with the moſt exquiſite torments of 'body, and with dignity, with reſignation, without 'complaining, almoſt without a tear, undergo the 'moſt painful and dreadful operations of ſurgery 'in ſuch a ſituation.' Here he ſtopped, and a torrent of tears guſhed from his eyes; ſuch tears as are apt to flow from a truly noble heart, at the hearing of any thing ſupriſingly great and glorious. As ſoon as he was able he again proceeded thus:

'Would you think, Miſs Matthews, that the miſ-'fortune of my Amelia was capable of any agrava-'tion! I aſſure you, ſhe hath often told me it was 'aggravated with a circumſtance which outweighed 'all the other ingredients. This was the cruel inſults 'ſhe received from ſome of her moſt intimate ac-'quaintance, ſeveral of whom, after many diſtor-'tions

'tions and grimaces, have turned their heads aſide, 'unable to ſupport their ſecret triumph, and burſt 'into a loud laugh in their hearing.'

'Good heaven!' cried Miſs Matthews, 'what de-'teſtable actions will this contemptible paſſion of 'envy prevail on our ſex to commit?'

'An occaſion of this kind as ſhe has ſince told 'me, made the firſt impreſſion on her gentle heart in 'my favour. I was one day in company with ſeveral 'young ladies, or rather, young devils, where poor 'Amelia's accident was the ſubject of much mirth 'and pleaſantry. One of theſe ſaid, ſhe hoped Miſs 'would not hold her head ſo high for the future. 'Another anſwered, I do not know, madam, what 'ſhe may do with her head, but I am convinced ſhe 'will never more turn up her noſe at her betters. 'Another cried, what a very proper match might 'now be made between Amelia and a certain cap-'tain, who had unfortunately received an injury in 'the ſame part, though from no ſhameful cauſe. 'Many other ſarcaſms were thrown out, very unwor-'thy to be repeated. I was hurt in perceiving ſo 'much malice in human ſhape, and cried out very 'bluntly, indeed, ladies, you need not expreſs ſuch 'ſatisfaction at poor Miſs Emily's accident: for ſhe 'will ſtill be the handſomeſt woman in England. 'This ſpeech of mine was afterwards variouſly re-'peated by ſome to my honour, and by others re-'preſented in a contrary light; indeed it was often re-'ported to be much ruder than it was. However, it 'at length reached Amelia's ears. She ſaid ſhe was 'very much obliged to me; ſince I could have ſo 'much compaſſion for her as to be rude to a lady on 'her account.

'About a month after the accident, when Amelia 'began to ſee company, in a maſk, I had the honour 'to drink tea with her. We were alone together, 'and I begged her to indulge my curioſity by ſhow-'ing me her face. She anſwered in a moſt obliging 'manner, "perhaps, Mr. Booth, you will as little "know me when my maſk is off, as when it is on; "and at the ſame inſtant unmaſked."—The ſurgeon's

"skill

'ſkill was the leaſt I conſidered. A thouſand tender 'ideas ruſhed all at once on my mind. I was unable 'to contain myſelf, and eagerly kiſſing her hand, I 'cried—Upon my ſoul, madam, you never appeared 'to me ſo lovely as at this inſtant. Nothing more 'remarkable paſſed at this viſit; but I ſincerely be-'lieve we were neither of us hereafter indifferent to 'each other.

'Many months, however, paſſed after this, before 'I ever thought ſeriouſly of making her my wife. 'Not that I wanted ſufficient love for Amelia. In-'deed it aroſe from the vaſt affection I bore her. I 'conſidered my own as a deſperate fortune, her's as 'entirely dependent on her mother, who was a woman, 'you know, of violent paſſions, and very unlikely 'to conſent to a match ſo highly contrary to the in-'tereſt of her daughter. The more I loved Amelia, 'the more firmly I reſolved within myſelf never to 'propoſe love to her ſeriouſly. Such a dupe was my 'underſtanding to my heart; and ſo fooliſhly did I 'imagine I could be maſter of a flame to which I 'was every day adding fuel.

'O, Miſs Matthews! we have heard of men en-'tirely maſters of their paſſions, and of hearts which 'can carry this fire in them, and conceal it at their 'pleaſure. Perhaps there may be ſuch; but if 'there are, thoſe hearts may be compared, I be-'lieve, to damps, in which it is more difficult to 'keep fire alive than to prevent its blazing: in 'mine, it was placed in the midſt of combuſtible 'matter.

'After ſeveral viſits, in which looks and ſighs 'had been interchanged on both ſides, but without 'the leaſt mention of paſſion in private, one day 'the diſcourſe between us, when alone, happened 'to turn on love; I ſay happened, for I proteſt it was 'not deſigned on my ſide, and I am as firmly con-'vinced not on her's. I was now no longer maſter 'of myſelf, I declared myſelf the moſt wretched of all 'martyrs to this tender paſſion; that I had long con-'cealed it from its object. At length, after men-'tioning many particulars, ſuppreſſing, however,

'thoſe which muſt have neceſſarily brought it home 'to Amelia, I concluded with begging her to be the 'confidante of my amour, and to give me her ad-'vice on that occaſion.

'Amelia (O I ſhall never forget the dear pertur-'bation!) appeared all confuſion at this inſtant. She 'trembled, turned pale, and diſcovered how well ſhe 'underſtood me, by a thouſand more ſymptoms than 'I could take notice of, in a ſtate of mind ſo very 'little different from her own. At laſt, with falter-'ing accents, ſhe ſaid, I had made a very ill choice 'of a counſellor, in a matter in which ſhe was ſo ig-'norant.—Adding, at laſt, I believe, Mr. Booth, 'you gentlemen want very little advice in theſe af-'fairs, which you all underſtand better than we do.

'I will relate no more of our converſation at pre-'ſent; indeed I am afraid I tire you with too many 'particulars.'

'O no,' anſwered ſhe, 'I ſhould be glad to hear 'every ſtep of an amour which had ſo tender a be-'ginning. Tell me every thing you ſaid or did, if 'you can remember it.'

He then proceeded, and ſo will we in the next chapter.

CHAP. II.

Mr. Booth *continues his ſtory. In this chapter there are ſome paſſages that may ſerve as a kind of touchſtone, by which a young lady may examine the heart of her lover. I would adviſe, therefore, that every lover be obliged to read it over in the preſence of his miſtreſs, and that ſhe carefully watch his emotions while he is reading.*

'I WAS under the utmoſt concern,' cries Booth, 'when I retired from my viſit, and had reflected 'coolly on what I had ſaid. I now ſaw plainly that 'I had made downright love to Amelia; and I feared, 'ſuch was my vanity, that I had already gone too 'far, and been too ſucceſsful. Feared! do I ſay, 'could I fear what I hoped? how ſhall I deſcribe the 'anxiety of my mind!

'You

'You need give yourself no great pain,' cried Miss Matthews, 'to describe what I can so easily guess. 'To be honest with you, Mr. Booth, I do not agree 'with your lady's opinion, that the men have a supe- 'rior understanding in the matters of love. Men are 'often blind to the passions of women; but every 'woman is as quick-sighted as a hawk on these oc- 'casions; nor is there one article in the whole science 'which is not understood by all our sex.

'However, madam,' said Mr. Booth, 'I now un- 'dertook to deceive Amelia. I abstained three days 'from seeing her; to say the truth, I endeavoured 'to work myself up to a resolution of leaving her for 'ever; but when I could not so far subdue my passion '—But why do I talk nonsense, of subduing passion? 'I should say, when no other passion could surmount 'my love, I returned to visit her, and now I attempt- 'ed the strangest project which ever entered into the 'silly head of a lover. This was to persuade Amelia 'that I was really in love in another place, and had 'literally expressed my meaning, when I asked her 'advice, and desired her to be my confidante.

'I, therefore, forged a meeting to have been be- 'tween me and my imaginary mistress, since I had 'last seen Amelia, and related the particulars as well 'as I could invent them, which had passed at our 'conversation.

'Poor Amelia presently swallowed this bait; and, 'as she hath told me since, absolutely believed me to 'be in earnest. Poor dear love! how should the 'sincerest of hearts have any idea of deceit? for 'with all her simplicity, I assure you she is the most 'sensible woman in the world.'

'It is highly generous and good in you' (said Miss Matthews, with a sly sneer) 'to impute to honesty 'what others would perhaps call credulity.'

'I protest, madam,' answered he, 'I do her no 'more than justice. A good heart will at all times 'betray the best head in the world.—Well, madam, 'my angel was now, if possible, more confused, 'than before. She looked so silly, you can hardly 'believe it.'——

'Yes, yes, I can,' anſwered the lady, with a laugh, 'I can believe it.—Well, well, go on.'—'After ſome heſitation,' cried he, 'my Amelia ſaid 'faintly to me, "Mr. Booth, you uſe me very ill; "you deſire me to be your confidante, and conceal "from me the name of your miſtreſs."

'Is it poſſible then, madam, anſwered I, that you 'cannot gueſs her, when I tell you ſhe is one of 'your acquaintance, and lives in this town?'

"My acquaintance," ſaid ſhe, "La! Mr. Booth. "—In this town. I—I—I thought I could have "gueſſed for once; but I have an ill talent that "way—I will never attempt to gueſs any thing "again." 'Indeed I do her an injury when I pretend to repreſent her manner. Her manner, look, 'voice, every thing was inimitable; ſuch ſweetneſs, 'ſoftneſs, innocence, modeſty.—Upon my ſoul, if 'ever man could boaſt of his reſolution, I think I 'might now, that I abſtained from falling proſtrate 'at her feet, and adoring her. However, I triumphed; pride, I believe, triumphed, or perhaps love 'got the better of love. We once more parted, and 'I promiſed the next time I ſaw her, to reveal the 'name of my miſtreſs.

'I now had, I thought, gained a complete victory over myſelf; and no ſmall compliments did I 'pay to my own reſolution. In ſhort, I triumphed 'as cowards and niggards do when they flatter themſelves with having given ſome ſuppoſed inſtance of 'courage or generoſity; and my triumph laſted as 'long; that is to ſay, till my aſcendent paſſion had a 'proper opportunity of diſplaying itſelf in its true 'and natural colours.

'Having hitherto ſucceeded ſo well in my own 'opinion, and obtained this mighty ſelf-conqueſt, I 'now entertained a deſign of exerting the moſt romantic generoſity, and of curing that unhappy 'paſſion which I perceived I had raiſed in Amelia.

'Among the ladies who had expreſſed the greateſt 'ſatisfaction at my Amelia's misfortune, Miſs Oſborne had diſtinguiſhed herſelf in a very eminent 'degree; ſhe was indeed the next in beauty to my

'angel,

'angel, nay, ſhe had diſputed the preference, and 'had ſome among her admirers, who were blind 'enough to give it in her favour.'

'Well,' cries the lady, 'I will allow you to call 'them blind; but Miſs Oſborne was a charming 'girl.'

'She certainly was handſome,' anſwered he, 'and 'a very conſiderable fortune; ſo I thought my Ame-'lia would have little difficulty in believing me, 'when I fixed on her as my miſtreſs. And I con-'cluded, that my thus placing my affections on her 'known enemy, would be the ſureſt method of era-'dicating every tender idea with which I had been 'ever honoured by Amelia.

'Well then, to Amelia I went; ſhe received me 'with more than uſual coldneſs and reſerve. In 'which, to confeſs the truth, there appeared to me 'more of anger than indifference, and more of 'dejection than of either. After ſome ſhort intro-'duction, I revived the diſcourſe of my amour, 'and preſently mentioned Miſs Oſborne as the lady 'whoſe name I had concealed; adding, that the 'true reaſon why I did not mention her before, 'was, that I apprehended there was ſome little diſ-'tance between them, which I hoped to have the 'happineſs of accommodating.

'Amelia anſwered with much gravity, "If you "know, ſir, that there is any diſtance between us, "I ſuppoſe you know the reaſon of that diſtance; "and then, I think, I could not have expected to be "affronted by her name. I would not have you "think, Mr. Booth, that I hate Miſs Oſborne. "No! Heaven is my witneſs, I deſpiſe her too "much.—Indeed, when I reflect how much I loved "the woman who hath treated me ſo cruelly, I own "it gives me pain—When I lay, as I then imagined, "and as all about me believed, upon my death-bed, "in all the agonies of pain and miſery, to become "the object of laughter to my deareſt friend.—O, "Mr. Booth, it is a cruel reflexion! and could I "after this have expected from you:—but why, "not from you, to whom I am a perſon entirely in-

'different, if ſuch a friend could treat me ſo bar-
"barouſly?"

'During the greateſt part of this ſpeech, the 'tears ſtreamed from her bright eyes, I could en-'dure it no longer. I caught up the word indiffer-'ent, and repeated it, ſaying, Do you think then, 'madam, that Miſs Emily is indifferent to me?'

"Yes, ſurely, I do," anſwered ſhe, "I know I "am; indeed, why ſhould I not be indifferent to "you?"

'Have my eyes,' ſaid I, 'then, declared no-'thing?'

"O there is no need of your eyes," anſwered ſhe. "Your tongue hath declared that you have "ſingled out of all womankind my greateſt, I will "ſay, my baſeſt enemy.——I own I once thought "that character would have been no recommenda-"tion to you—But why did I think ſo? I was born "to deceive myſelf."

'I then fell on my knees before her; and, forcing 'her hand, cried out, O, my Amelia! I can bear 'no longer. You are the only miſtreſs of my affec-'tions; you are the deity I adore. In this ſtyle, I 'ran on for above two or three minutes, what it is 'impoſſible to repeat, till a torrent of contending 'paſſions, together with the ſurpriſe, overpowered 'her gentle ſpirits, and ſhe fainted away in my 'arms.

'To deſcribe my ſenſation till ſhe returned to 'herſelf, is not in my power.'—'You need not,' cried Miſs Matthews.—'Oh, happy Amelia! why 'had I not been bleſſed with ſuch a paſſion?'—'I am 'convinced, madam,' continued he, 'you cannot 'expect all the particulars of the tender ſcene which 'enſued. I was not enough in my ſenſes to re-'member it all. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that That 'behaviour with which Amelia, while ignorant of 'its motive, had been ſo much diſpleaſed, when 'ſhe became ſenſible of that motive, proved the 'ſtrongeſt recommendation to her favour; and ſhe 'was pleaſed to call it generous.'

'Gene-

'Generous!' repeated the lady, 'and ſo it was 'almoſt beyond the reach of humanity. I queſtion 'whether you ever had an equal.'

Perhaps the critical reader may have the ſame doubt with Miſs Matthews, and, leſt he ſhould, we will here make a gap in our hiſtory, to give him an opportunity of accurately conſidering whether this conduct of Mr. Booth was natural or no; and conſequently, whether we have, in this place, maintained or deviated from that ſtrict adherence to univerſal truth which we profeſs above all other hiſtorians.

CHAP. III.

The narrative continued. More of the touchſtone.

BOOTH made a proper acknowledgement of Miſs Matthews's civility, and then renewed his ſtory.

'We were upon the footing of lovers; and 'Amelia threw off her reſerve more and more, till 'at length I found all that return of my affection 'which the tendereſt lover can require.

'My ſituation would now have been a paradiſe, 'had not my happineſs been interrupted with the 'ſame reflexions I have already mentioned; had I 'not in ſhort concluded, that I muſt derive all my 'joys from the almoſt certain ruin of that dear 'creature to whom I ſhould owe them.

'This thought haunted me night and day; till 'I, at laſt, grew unable to ſupport it: I, therefore, 'reſolved in the ſtrongeſt manner to lay it before 'Amelia.

'One evening then, after the higheſt profeſſions 'of the moſt diſintereſted love, in which Heaven 'knows my ſincerity, I took an occaſion to ſpeak 'to Amelia, in the following manner:

"Too true is it, I am afraid, my deareſt crea-"ture, that the higheſt human happineſs is imper-"fect. How rich would be my cup, was it not "for one poiſonous drop which embitters the whole!

"O, Ame-

" O, Amelia, what muſt be the conſequence of my " ever having the honour to call you mine!—You " know my ſituation in life, and you know your " own: I have nothing more than the poor pro- " viſion of an enſign's commiſſion to depend on; " your ſole dependence is on your mother; ſhould " any act of diſobedience defeat your expectations, " how wretched muſt your lot be with me! O, " Amelia, how ghaſtly an object to my mind is the " apprehenſion of your diſtreſs! can I bear to re- " flect a moment on the certainty of your forego- " ing all the conveniencies of life; on the poſſi- " bility of your ſuffering all its moſt dreadful in- " conveniencies! what muſt be my miſery then, to " ſee you in ſuch a ſituation, and to upbraid myſelf " with being the accurſed cauſe of bringing you to " it! ſuppoſe too, in ſuch a ſeaſon, I ſhould be " ſummoned from you. Could I ſubmit to ſee you " encounter all the hazards, the fatigues of war, " with me! you could not yourſelf, however wil- " ling, ſupport them a ſingle campaign. What " then, muſt I leave you to ſtarve alone, deprived " of the tenderneſs of a huſband, deprived too of " the tenderneſs of the beſt of mothers, through " my means? a woman moſt dear to me, for being " the parent, the nurſe, and the friend of my " Amelia.——But, O, my ſweet creature, carry " your thoughts a little farther. Think of the " tendereſt conſequences, the deareſt pledges of " our love. Can I bear to think of entailing beg- " gary on the poſterity of my Amelia? on our—— " O Heavens! on our children?—On the other " ſide, is it poſſible even to mention the word—I " will not, muſt not, cannot, cannot part with you. " —What muſt we do, Amelia? it is now I ſincerely " aſk your advice."

'What advice can I give you,' ſaid ſhe, 'in ſuch 'an alternative? would to Heaven we had never 'met.'

'Theſe words were accompanied with a ſigh, and 'a look inexpreſſibly tender, the tears at the ſame 'time overflowing all her lovely cheeks. I was

'endea-

'endeavouring to reply, when I was interrupted by 'what ſoon put an end to the ſcene.

'Our amour had already been buzzed all over 'the town; and it came at laſt to the ears of Mrs. 'Harris: I had, indeed, obſerved of late a great 'alteration in that lady's behaviour towards me, 'whenever I viſited at the houſe; nor could I for 'a long time, before this evening, ever obtain a 'private interview with Amelia; and now it ſeems, 'I owed it to her mother's intention of over-hear-'ing all that paſſed between us.

'At the period then abovementioned, Mrs. Harris 'burſt from the cloſet, where ſhe had hid herſelf, 'and ſurpriſed her daughter, reclining on my boſom, 'in all that tender ſorrow I have juſt deſcribed. I 'will not attempt to paint the rage of the mother, 'or the daughter's confuſion, or my own. "Here "are very fine doings, indeed," cries Mrs. Harris; "You have made a noble uſe, Amelia, of my in-"dulgence, and the truſt I repoſed in you.—As for "you, Mr. Booth, I will not accuſe you; you have "uſed my child, as I ought to have expected; I "may thank myſelf for what hath happened;" with 'much more of the ſame kind, before ſhe would 'ſuffer me to ſpeak; but, at laſt, I obtained a hear-'ing, and offered to excuſe my poor Amelia, who 'was ready to ſink into the earth under the oppreſſion 'of grief, by taking as much blame as I could 'on myſelf.' Mrs. Harris anſwered, "No, ſir, I "muſt ſay you are innocent in compariſon of her; "nay, I can ſay, I have heard you uſe diſſuaſive "arguments; and I promiſe you they are of weight. "I have, I thank heaven one dutiful child, and I "ſhall henceforth think her my only one:"—'She 'then forced the poor, trembling, fainting Amelia 'out of the room; which when ſhe had done, ſhe 'began very coolly to reaſon with me on the folly, 'as well as iniquity, which I had been guilty of; 'and repeated to me almoſt every word I had before 'urged to her daughter. In fine, ſhe at laſt obtained 'of me a promiſe that I would ſoon go to my regi-

'ment,

'ment, and ſubmit to any miſery, rather than that 'of being the ruin of Amelia.

'I now, for many days, endured the greateſt tor-'ments which the human mind is, I believe, capable 'of feeling: and I can honeſtly ſay, I tried all the 'means, and applied every argument which I could 'raiſe to cure me of my love. And to make theſe 'the more effectual, I ſpent every night in walking 'backwards and forwards in the ſight of Mrs. 'Harris's houſe, where I never failed to find ſome 'object or other, which raiſed ſome tender idea of 'my lovely Amelia, and almoſt drove me to diſ-'traction.'

'And, don't you think, ſir,' ſaid Miſs Mathews, 'you took a moſt prepoſterous method to cure 'yourſelf?'

'Alas, madam,' anſwered he, 'you cannot ſee 'it in a more abſurd light than I do; but thoſe 'know little of real love or grief, who do not know 'how much we deceive ourſelves when we pretend to 'aim at the cure of either. It is with theſe, as it is 'with ſome diſtempers of the body, nothing is, in 'the leaſt, agreeable to us but what ſerves to heighten 'the diſeaſe.

'At the end of a fortnight, when I was driven 'almoſt to the higheſt degree of deſpair, and could 'contrive no method of conveying a letter to 'Amelia, how was I ſurpriſed when Mrs. Harris's 'ſervant brought me a card, with an invitation 'from the mother herſelf, to drink tea that evening 'at her houſe!

'You will eaſily believe, madam, that I did not 'fail ſo agreeable an appointment; on my arrival, 'I was introduced into a large company of men 'and women, Mrs. Harris, and my Amelia being 'part of the company.

'Amelia ſeemed in my eyes to look more beau-'tiful than ever, and behaved with all the gaiety 'imaginable. The old lady treated me with much 'civility; but the young lady took little notice of 'me, and addreſſed moſt of her diſcourſe to ano-'ther gentleman preſent. Indeed, ſhe now and

'then gave me a look of no diſcouraging kind;
'and I obſerved her colour change more than once,
'when her eyes met mine: circumſtances which,
'perhaps, ought to have afforded me ſufficient
'comfort; but they could not allay the thouſand
'doubts and fears with which I was alarmed: for
'my anxious thoughts ſuggeſted no leſs to me than
'that Amelia had made her peace with her mother
'at the price of abandoning me for ever, and of
'giving her ear to ſome other lover. All my pru-
'dence now vaniſhed at once; and I would that in-
'ſtant have gladly run away with Amelia, and have
'married her without the leaſt conſideration of any
'conſequences.

'With ſuch thoughts I had tormented myſelf
'for near two hours, till moſt of the company had
'taken their leave. This I was myſelf incapable
'of doing; nor do I know when I ſhould have put
'an end to my viſit, had not Dr. Harriſon taken
'me away almoſt by force, telling me in a whiſper,
'that he had ſomething to ſay to me of great conſe-
'quence.—You know the doctor, madam—'

'Very well, ſir,' anſwered Miſs Mathews, 'and
'one of the beſt men in the world he is, and an ho-
'nour to the ſacred order to which he belongs.'

'You will judge,' replied Booth, 'by the ſequel,
'whether I have reaſon to think him ſo.———He
'proceeded as in the next chapter.

CHAP. IV.

The ſtory of Mr. Booth *continued: In this chapter the reader will perceive a glimpſe of the character of a very good divine; with ſome matters of a very tender kind.*

'THE doctor conducted me into his ſtudy; and
'then deſiring me to ſit down, began, as near
'as I can remember, in theſe words, or at leaſt to this
'purpoſe:

"You cannot imagine, young gentleman, that
"your love for Miſs Emily is any ſecret in this
"place; I have known it ſome time, and have

"been

" been I assure you very much your enemy in this " affair."

' I answered, that I was very much obliged to ' him.'

" Why, so you are," replied he, " and so per- " haps you will think yourself when you know all.— " I went about a fortnight ago to Mrs. Harris, to " acquaint her with my apprehensions on her daugh- " ter's account: for though the matter was much " talked of, I thought it might possibly not have " reached her ears. I will be very plain with you. " I advised her to take all possible care of the young " lady, and even to send her to some place, where " she might be effectually kept out of your reach, " while you remained in the town."

' And do you think, sir,' said I, ' that this was ' acting a kind part by me? or do you expect that ' I should thank you on this occasion?'

" Young man," answered he, " I did not in- " tend you any kindness; nor do I desire any of your " thanks. My intention was to preserve a worthy " lady from a young fellow of whom I had heard " no good character, and whom I imagined to have " a design of stealing a human creature for the sake " of her fortune."

' It was very kind of you indeed,' answered I, ' to entertain such an opinion of me.'

" Why, sir," replied the doctor, " it is the opi- " nion which, I believe, most of you young gentle- " men, of the order of the rag deserve. I have " known some instances, and have heard of more, " where such young fellows have committed robbery " under the name of marriage."

' I was going to interrupt him with some anger, ' when he desired me to have a little patience, and ' then informed me, that he had visited Mrs. Har- ' ris with the abovementioned design, the even- ' ing after the discovery I have related; that Mrs. ' Harris, without waiting for his information, had ' recounted to him all which had happened the ' evening before; nad indeed she must have an ' excellent memory, for I think she repeated every

' word

'word I ſaid; and added that ſhe had confined 'her daughter to her chamber, where ſhe kept her 'a cloſe priſoner, and had not ſeen her ſince.

'I cannot expreſs, nor would modeſty ſuffer me 'if I could, all that now paſſed. The doctor took 'me by the hand, and burſt forth into the warmeſt 'commendations of the ſenſe and generoſity which 'he was pleaſed to ſay diſcovered themſelves in my 'ſpeech. You know, madam, his ſtrong and ſin-'gular way of expreſſing himſelf on all occaſions, 'eſpecially when he is affected with any thing. Sir, 'ſaid he, if I knew half a dozen ſuch inſtances in 'the army, the painter ſhould put red liveries upon 'all the ſaints in my cloſet.

'From this inſtant the doctor told me, he had 'become my friend and zealous advocate with Mrs. 'Harris, on whom he had at laſt prevailed, though 'not without the greateſt difficulty, to conſent to 'my marrying Amelia, upon condition that I ſettled 'every penny which the mother ſhould lay down; 'and that ſhe would retain a certain ſum in her 'hands, which ſhe would at any time depoſite for 'my advancement in the army.

'You will, I hope, madam, conceive, that I 'made no heſitation at theſe conditions; nor need 'I mention the joy which I felt on this occaſion, or 'the acknowledgement I paid the doctor, who is 'indeed, as you ſay, one of the beſt of men.

'The next morning I had permiſſion to viſit Ame-'lia, who received me in ſuch a manner, that I now 'concluded my happineſs to be complete.

'Every thing was now agreed on all ſides, and 'lawyers employed to prepare the writings, when 'an unexpected cloud aroſe ſuddenly in our ſerene 'ſky, and all our joys were obſcured in a moment.

'When matters were, as I apprehended, drawing 'near a concluſion, I received an expreſs that a 'ſiſter, whom I tenderly loved, was ſeized with a 'violent fever, and earneſtly deſired me to come to 'her. I immediately obeyed the ſummons, and, 'as it was then about two in the morning, without 'ſtaying even to take leave of Amelia, for whom

'I left a ſhort billet acquainting her with the reaſon of my abſence.

'The gentleman's houſe where my ſiſter then was, ſtood at fifty miles diſtance, and though I uſed the utmoſt expedition, the unmerciful diſtemper had, before my arrival, entirely deprived the poor girl of her ſenſes, as it ſoon after did of her life.

'Not all the love I bore Amelia, nor the tumultuous delight with which the approaching hour of poſſeſſing her filled my heart, could, for a while, allay my grief at the loſs of my beloved Nancy. Upon my ſoul, I cannot yet mention her name without tears. Never brother and ſiſter had, I believe, a higher friendſhip for each other. Poor dear girl; whilſt I ſat by her in her light-headed fits, ſhe repeated ſcarce any other name but mine: and it plainly appeared that when her dear reaſon was raviſhed away from her, it had left my image on her fancy, and that the laſt uſe ſhe had made of it was to think on me—"Send for my dear Billy immediately," ſhe cried, "I know he will come to me in a moment. Will nobody fetch him to me? pray don't kill me before I ſee him once more—You durſt not uſe me ſo if he was here."—'Every accent ſtill rings in my ears—'Oh heavens! to hear this, and at the ſame time to ſee the poor delirious creature deriving the greateſt horrors from my ſight, and miſtaking me for a highwayman who had a little before robbed her.—'But I aſk your pardon, the ſenſations I felt are to be known only from experience, and to you muſt appear dull and inſipid.—At laſt ſhe ſeemed for a moment to know me, and cried, "O heavens! my deareſt brother!" upon which ſhe fell into immediate convulſions, and died away in my arms.'

Here Booth ſtopped a moment, and wiped his eyes; and Miſs Matthews, perhaps out of complaiſance, wiped hers.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Containing ſtrange revolutions of fortune.

BOOTH proceeded thus:

'This loſs, perhaps, madam, you will think 'had made me miſerable enough; but fortune did 'not think ſo: for on the day when my Nancy was 'to be buried, a courier arrived from Dr. Harriſon 'with a letter, in which the doctor acquainted me, 'that he was juſt come from Mrs. Harris, when he 'diſpatched the expreſs; and earneſtly deſired me 'to return the very inſtant I received his letter, as 'I valued my Amelia. Though, if the daughter, 'added he, ſhould take after her mother (as moſt 'of them do) it will be, perhaps, wiſer in you to 'ſtay away.

'I preſently ſent for the meſſenger into my room, 'and with much difficulty extorted from him, that 'a great 'ſquire in his coach and ſix was come to 'Mrs. Harris's, and that the whole town ſaid he was 'ſhortly to be married to Amelia.

'I now ſoon perceived how much ſuperior my 'love for Amelia was to every other paſſion; poor 'Nancy's idea diſappeared in a moment; I quitted 'the dear lifeleſs corpſe, over which I had ſhed a 'thouſand tears, left the care of the funeral to others, 'and poſted, I may almoſt ſay flew, back to my 'Amelia, and alighted at the doctor's houſe, as he 'had deſired me in his letter.

'The good man preſently acquainted me with 'what had happened in my abſence. Mr. Winck-'worth had, it ſeems, arrived the very day of my 'departure, with a grand equipage, and without 'delay, had made formal propoſals to Mrs. Harris, 'offering to ſettle any part of his vaſt eſtate, in 'whatever manner ſhe pleaſed, on Amelia. Theſe 'propoſals the old lady had, without any delibe-'ration, accepted, and had inſiſted, in the moſt 'violent manner, on her daughter's compliance, 'which Amelia had as peremptorily refuſed to 'give; inſiſting, on her part, on the conſent which

'her

'her mother had before given to our marriage, in 'which ſhe was heartily ſeconded by the doctor, who 'declared to her, as he now did to me,' "that we "ought as much to be eſteemed man and wife, as if "the ceremony had already paſt between us."

'Theſe remonſtrances, the doctor told me, had 'worked no effect on Mrs. Harris, who ſtill perſiſted 'in her avowed reſolution of marrying her daughter 'to Winckworth, whom the doctor had likewiſe at-'tacked, telling him that he was paying his addreſſes 'to another man's wife; but all to no purpoſe, the 'young gentleman was too much in love to hearken 'to any diſſuaſives.

'We now entered into a conſultation what means 'to employ. The doctor earneſtly proteſted againſt 'any violence to be offered to the perſon of Winck-'worth, which, I believe, I had raſhly threatened; 'declaring, that if I made any attempt of that kind, 'he would for ever abandon my cauſe. I made him 'a ſolemn promiſe of forbearance. At laſt, he de-'termined to pay another viſit to Mrs. Harris, and if 'he found her obdurate, he ſaid he thought himſelf 'at liberty to join us together without any further 'conſent of the mother; which every parent, he ſaid, 'had a right to refuſe, but not to retract when given, 'unleſs the party himſelf, by ſome conduct of his, 'gave a reaſon.

'The doctor having made his viſit with no better 'ſucceſs than before, the matter now debated was, 'how to get poſſeſſion of Amelia by ſtratagem; for 'ſhe was now a cloſer priſoner than ever, was her 'mother's bed-fellow by night, and never out of her 'ſight by day.

'While we were deliberating on this point, a wine-'merchant of the town came to viſit the doctor, to 'inform him that he had juſt bottled off a hogſhead 'of excellent old port, of which he offered to ſpare 'him a hamper, ſaying, that he was that day to ſend 'in twelve dozen to Mrs. Harris.

'The doctor now ſmiled at a conceit which came 'into his head; and, taking me aſide, aſked me if 'I had love enough for the young lady to venture

'into the houſe in a hamper. I joyfully leapt at the 'propoſal, to which the merchant, at the doctor's 'interceſſion, conſented: for I believe, madam, you 'know the great authority which that worthy man 'had over the whole town. The doctor, moreover, 'promiſed to procure a licence, and to perform the 'office for us at his houſe, if I could find any means 'of conveying Amelia thither.

'In this hamper then I was carried to the houſe, 'and depoſited in the entry, where I had not lain 'long before I was again removed and packed up in 'a cart, in order to be ſent five miles into the coun-'try: for I heard the orders given as I lay in the en-'try; and there I likewiſe heard that Amelia and her 'mother were to follow me the next morning.

'I was unloaded from my cart, and ſet down with 'the reſt of the lumber, in a great hall. Here I re-'mained above three hours, impatiently waiting for 'the evening, when I determined to quit a poſture, 'which was become very uneaſy, and break my pri-'ſon; but fortune contrived to releaſe me ſooner, by 'the following means: The houſe where I now was, 'had been left in the care of one maid-ſervant. This 'faithful creature came into the hall, with the foot-'man who had driven the cart. A ſcene of the high-'eſt fondneſs having paſt between them, the fellow 'propoſed, and the maid conſented, to open the 'hamper and drink a bottle together, which they 'agreed their miſtreſs would hardly miſs in ſuch a 'quantity. They preſently began to execute their 'purpoſe. They opened the hamper, and to their 'great ſurpriſe diſcovered the contents.

'I took an immediate advantage of the conſterna-'tion which appeared in the countenances of both 'the ſervants, and had ſufficient preſence of mind to 'improve the knowledge of thoſe ſecrets to which I 'was privy. I told them that it entirely depended on 'their behaviour to me, whether their miſtreſs ſhould 'ever be acquainted, either with what they had 'done, or with what they had intended to do; for 'that if they would keep my ſecret, I would recipro-'cally keep theirs. I then acquainted them with my

pur-

'purpoſe of lying concealed in the houſe, in order to 'watch an opportunity of obtaining a private inter-'view with Amelia.

'In the ſituation in which theſe two delinquents 'ſtood, you may be aſſured it was not difficult for me 'to ſeal up their lips. In ſhort, they agreed to what-'ever I propoſed. I lay that evening in my dear 'Amelia's bed-chamber, and was in the morning 'conveyed into an old lumber-garret, where I was to 'wait till Amelia (whom the maid promiſed, on her 'arrival, to inform of my place of concealment, 'could find ſome opportunity of ſeeing me.

'I aſk pardon for interrupting you,' cries Miſs 'Matthews, 'but you bring to my remembrance a 'fooliſh ſtory which I heard at that time, though at 'a great diſtance from you: that an officer had, in 'confederacy with Miſs Harris, broke open her mo-'ther's cellar, and ſtole away a great quantity of her 'wine. I mention it only to ſhew you what ſort of 'foundations moſt ſtories have.'

Booth told her he had heard ſome ſuch thing him-ſelf, and then continued his ſtory as in the next chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Containing many ſurpriſing adventures.

'HERE,' continued he, 'I remained the whole 'day in hopes of a happineſs, the expected 'approach of which, gave me ſuch a delight, that 'I would not have exchanged my poor lodgings for 'the fineſt palace in the univerſe.

'A little after it was dark Mrs. Harris arrived, to-'gether with Amelia and her ſiſter. I cannot expreſs 'how much my heart now began to flutter; for as 'my hopes every moment encreaſed, ſtrange fears 'which I had not felt before, began now to inter-'mingle with them.

'When I had continued full two hours in theſe 'circumſtances, I heard a woman's ſtep tripping 'up ſtairs, which I fondly hoped was my Amelia;

'but

'but all on a ſudden the door flew open, and Mrs. 'Harris herſelf appeared at it, with a countenance 'pale as death, her whole body trembling, I ſuppoſe 'with anger; ſhe fell upon me in the moſt bitter lan- 'guage. It is not neceſſary to repeat what ſhe ſaid, 'nor indeed can I, I was ſo ſhocked and confounded 'on this occaſion.—In a word, the ſcene ended with 'my departing without ſeeing Amelia.'

"And pray," cries Miſs Matthews, "how happened "this unfortunate diſcovery?"

Booth anſwered, 'that the lady at ſupper ordered a 'bottle of wine, which neither myſelf,' ſaid he, 'nor the ſervants, had preſence of mind to provide. 'Being told there was none in the houſe, though 'ſhe had been before informed that the things 'came all ſafe, ſhe had ſent for the maid, who being 'unable to deviſe any excuſe, had fallen on her knees, 'and after confeſſing her deſign of opening a bottle, 'which ſhe imputed to the fellow, betrayed poor me 'to her miſtreſs.'

'Well, madam, after a lecture of about a quar- 'ter of an hour's duration from Mrs. Harris, I ſuffered 'her to conduct me to the outward gate of her court- 'yard, whence I ſet forward in a diſconſolate condi- 'tion of mind, towards my lodgings. I had five 'miles to walk in a dark and rainy night; but how 'can I mention theſe trifling circumſtances as any ag- 'gravation of my diſappointment.'

"How was it poſſible," cries Miſs Matthews, "that "you could be got out of the houſe without ſeeing "Miſs Harris?"

'I aſſure you, madam,' anſwered Booth, 'I have 'often wondered at it myſelf; but my ſpirits were ſo 'much ſunk at the ſight of her mother, that no man 'was ever a greater coward than I was at that inſtant. 'Indeed, I believe my tender concern for the terrors 'of Amelia, were the principal cauſe of my ſub- 'miſſion. However it was, I left the houſe, and 'walked about an hundred yards, when, at the 'corner of the garden wall, a female voice, in a 'whiſper, cried out, "Mr. Booth." The perſon 'was extremely near me, but it was ſo dark I could

'ſcarce ſee her; nor did I, in the confuſion I was in, 'immediately recognize the voice. I anſwered in a 'line of Congreve's, which burſt from my lips ſpon-'taneouſly; for I am ſure I had no intention to quote 'plays at that time:'

'Who calls the wretched thing that was Al-'phonſo?'

'Upon which a woman leapt into my arms, crying 'out,——"O it is indeed my Alphonſo, my only "Alphonſo?"—O Miſs Matthews! gueſs what I felt 'when I found I had my Amelia in my arms. I em-'braced her with an extaſy not to be deſcribed, at the 'ſame inſtant pouring a thouſand tenderneſſes into her 'ears; at leaſt, if I could expreſs ſo many to her in a 'minute; for in that time the alarm began at the 'houſe, Mrs. Harris had miſſed her daughter, and the 'court was preſently full of lights and noiſes of all 'kinds.'

'I now lifted Amelia over a gate, and jumping 'after, we crept along together by the ſide of a hedge 'a different way from what led to the town, as I ima-'gined that would be the road through which they 'would purſue us. In this opinion I was right: for 'we heard them paſs along that road, and the voice 'of Mrs. Harris herſelf, who ran with the reſt, not-'withſtanding the darkneſs and the rain. By theſe 'means we luckily made our eſcape, and clambring 'over hedge and ditch, my Amelia performing the 'part of a heroine all the way, we at length arrived 'at a little green lane, where ſtood a vaſt ſpreading 'oak, under which we ſheltered ourſelves from a vio-'lent ſtorm.'

'When this was over, and the moon began to ap-'pear, Amelia declared ſhe knew very well where ſhe 'was; and a little farther, ſtriking into another lane, 'to the right, ſhe ſaid, that would lead us to a houſe 'where we ſhould be both ſafe and unſuſpected. I 'followed her directions, and we at length came to a 'little cottage about three miles diſtant from Mrs. 'Harris's houſe.

'As it now rained very violently, we entered this 'cottage, in which we eſpied a light, without any

'cere-

'ceremony. Here we found an elderly woman ſitting by herſelf at a little fire, who had no ſooner 'viewed us, than ſhe inſtantly ſprung from her ſeat, 'and ſtarting back, gave the ſtrongeſt tokens of 'amazement; upon which Amelia ſaid, "Be not "ſurprized, nurſe, though you ſee me in a ſtrange "pickle I own." 'The old woman, after having ſe'veral times bleſſed herſelf, and expreſſed the moſt 'tender concern for the lady, who ſtood dripping be'fore her, began to beſtir herſelf in making up the 'fire; at the ſame time entreating Amelia, that ſhe 'might be permitted to furniſh her with ſome clothes, 'which, ſhe ſaid, though not fine, were clean and 'wholeſome, and much dryer than her own. I ſe'conded this motion ſo vehemently, that Amelia, 'though ſhe declared herſelf under no apprehenſion 'of catching cold (ſhe hath indeed the beſt conſtitu'tion in the world) at laſt conſented, and I retired 'without doors, under a ſhed, to give my angel an 'opportunity of dreſſing herſelf in the only room 'which the cottage afforded below ſtairs.

'At my return in the room, Amelia inſiſted on 'my exchanging my coat for one which belonged to 'the old woman's ſon.'—"I am very glad," cried Miſs Matthews, "to find ſhe did not forget you. I "own I thought it ſomewhat cruel to turn you out into "the rain!"—'O Miſs Matthews,' continued he, 'taking no notice of her obſervation, I had now an 'opportunity of contemplating the vaſt power of ex'quiſite beauty; which nothing almoſt can add to, 'or diminiſh. Amelia, in the poor rags of her old 'nurſe, looked ſcarce leſs beautiful than I have ſeen 'her appear at a ball or an aſſembly"—"Well, well," cries Miſs Matthews, "to be ſure ſhe did;—but "pray go on with your ſtory."

'The old woman,' continued he, 'after having 'equipped us as well as ſhe could, and placed our 'wet cloaths before the fire, began to grow inqui'ſitive; and after ſome ejaculations, ſhe cried,—"O "my dear young madam, my mind miſgives me "hugeouſly, and pray who is this fine young

" gentleman? O! Miſs Emmy, Miſs Emmy, I " am afraid madam knows nothing of all this mat- " ter.—" Suppoſe he ſhould be my huſband, nurſe," ' anſwered Amilia.—" Oh! good! and if he " be," replies the nurſe, " I hope he is ſome great " gentleman or other, with a vaſt eſtate, and a " coach and ſix: for to be ſure if an he was the " greateſt lord in the land, you would deſerve it " all."—' But why do I attempt to mimic the ho- ' neſt creature. In ſhort, ſhe diſcovered the greateſt ' affection for my Amelia: with which I was much ' more delighted than I was offended at the ſuſpicions ' ſhe ſhewed of me, or the many bitter curſes which ' ſhe denounced againſt me, if I ever proved a bad ' huſband to ſo ſweet a young lady.'

' I ſo well improved the hint given me by Ame- ' lia, that the old woman had no doubt of our be- ' ing really married; and comforting herſelf, that ' if it was not as well as it might have been, yet ' madam had enough for us both, and that hap- ' pineſs did not always depend on great riches, ſhe ' began to rail at the old lady for having turned us ' out of doors, which I ſcarce told an untruth in ' aſſerting. And when Amelia ſaid, " ſhe hoped " her nurſe would not betray her" — The good ' woman anſwered her with much warmth,—betray ' you, my dear young madam! no, that I would ' not if the king would give me all that he is ' worth. No, not if madam herſelf would give me ' the great houſe, and the whole farm belonging ' to it.'

' The good woman then went out and fetched a ' chicken from the rooſt, which ſhe killed, and ' began to pick, without aſking any queſtions. ' Then ſummoning her ſon, who was in bed, to ' her aſſiſtance, ſhe began to prepare this chicken ' for our ſupper. This ſhe afterwards ſet before ' us in ſo neat, I may almoſt ſay elegant a man- ' ner, that whoever would have diſdained it, either ' doth not know the ſenſation of hunger, or doth ' not deſerve to have it gratified. Our food was

' attended

'attended with ſome ale, which our kind hoſteſs 'ſaid ſhe intended not to have tapped till Chriſt-'mas; "but," added ſhe, "I little thought ever "to have the honour of ſeeing my dear honoured lady "in this poor place."

'For my own part, no human being was then an 'object of envy to me; and even Amelia ſeemed to 'be in pretty good ſpirits; ſhe ſoftly whiſpered to 'me, that ſhe perceived there might be happineſs in 'a cottage.'

"A cottage!" cries Miſs Matthews ſighing, "a "cottage with the man one loves is a palace."

'When ſupper was ended,' continued Booth, 'the good woman began to think of our further 'wants, and very earneſtly recommended her bed 'to us, ſaying, it was a very neat though homely 'one, and that ſhe could furniſh us with a pair 'of clean ſheets. She added ſome perſuaſives which 'painted my angel all over with vermillion. As 'for myſelf, I behaved ſo awkwardly and fooliſhly, 'and ſo readily agreed to Amelia's reſolution of 'ſitting up all night, that if it did not give the 'nurſe any ſuſpicion of our marriage, it ought to 'have inſpired her with the utmoſt contempt for 'me.'

'We both endeavoured to prevail with nurſe to 'retire to her own bed, but found it utterly im-'poſſible to ſucceed; ſhe thanked heaven ſhe un-'derſtood breeding better than that. And ſo well 'bred was the good woman, that we could ſcarce 'get her out of the room the whole night. Luckily 'for us we both underſtood French, by means of 'which we conſulted together, even in her preſence, 'upon the meaſures we were to take in our preſent 'exigency. At length it was reſolved that I ſhould 'ſend a letter by this young lad whom I have juſt 'before mentioned, to our worthy friend the doctor, 'deſiring his company at our hut, ſince we thought 'it utterly unſafe to venture to the town, which we 'knew would be in an uproar on our account before 'the morning.'

Here Booth made a full ſtop, ſmiled, and then ſaid, he was going to mention ſo ridiculous a diſtreſs, that he could ſcarce think of it without laughing.—What this was the reader ſhall know in the next chapter.

CHAP. VII.

The ſtory of Booth *continued. More ſurpriſing adventures.*

'FROM what trifles, dear Miſs Matthews,' cried Booth, 'may ſome of our greateſt diſtreſſes ariſe! do you not perceive I am going to tell you we had neither pen, ink, nor paper in our preſent exigency.

'A verbal meſſage was now our only reſource; however, we contrived to deliver it in ſuch terms, that neither nurſe nor her ſon could poſſibly conceive any ſuſpicion from it of the preſent ſituation of our affairs. Indeed, Amelia whiſpered me, I might ſafely place any degree of confidence in the lad; for he had been her foſter brother, and ſhe had a great opinion of his integrity. He was in truth a boy of very good natural parts; and Dr. Harriſon, who had received him into his family, at Amelia's recommendation, had bred him up to write and read very well, and had taken ſome pains to infuſe into him the principles of honeſty and religion. He was not indeed, even now diſcharged from the doctor's ſervice; but had been at home with his mother for ſome time on account of the ſmall-pox, from which he was lately recovered.

'I have ſaid ſo much,' continued Booth, 'of the boy's character, that you may not be ſurpriſed at ſome ſtories which I ſhall tell you of him hereafter.

'I am going now, madam, to relate to you one of thoſe ſtrange accidents, which are produced by ſuch a train of circumſtances, that mere chance hath

'hath been thought incapable of bringing them 'together; and which have therefore given birth, 'in ſuperſtitious minds, to fortune, and to ſeveral 'other imaginary beings.

'We were now impatiently expecting the arrival 'of the doctor; our meſſenger had been gone much 'more than a ſufficient time, which to us, you may 'be aſſured, appeared not at all ſhorter than it was, 'when nurſe, who had gone out of doors on ſome 'errand, came running haſtily to us, crying out, "O my dear young madam, her ladyſhip's coach "is juſt at the door." Amelia turned pale as death 'at theſe words; indeed, I feared ſhe would have 'fainted, if I could be ſaid to fear, who had ſcarce 'any of my ſenſes left, and was in a condition little 'better than my angel's.

'While we were both in this dreadful ſituation, 'Amelia fallen back in her chair with the counte-'nance in which ghoſts are painted, myſelf at her 'feet, with a complexion of no very different co-'lour, and nurſe ſcreaming out, and throwing wa-'ter in Amelia's face, Mrs. Harris entered the room. 'At the ſight of this ſcene, ſhe threw herſelf likewiſe 'into a chair, and called immediately for a glaſs of 'water, which Miſs Betty her daughter ſupplied her 'with: for as to nurſe, nothing was capable of mak-'ing any impreſſion on her, whilſt ſhe apprehended 'her young miſtreſs to be in danger.

'The doctor had now entered the room, and 'coming immediately up to Amelia, after ſome ex-'preſſions of ſurprize, he took her by the hand, 'called her his little ſugar-plumb, and aſſured her 'there were none but friends preſent. He then 'led her tottering acroſs the room to Mrs. Harris. 'Amelia then fell upon her knees before her mo-'ther, but the doctor caught her up ſaying, "uſe "that poſture, child, only to the Almighty;" but 'I need not mention this ſingularity of his to you 'who know him ſo well, and muſt have heard him 'often diſpute againſt addreſſing ourſelves to man 'in the humbleſt poſture which we uſe towards the 'ſupreme being.

'I will tire you with no more particulars; we 'were ſoon ſatisfied that the doctor had reconciled 'us and our affairs to Mrs. Harris; and we now 'proceeded directly to church, the doctor having 'before provided a licence for us.'

"But where is the ſtrange accident," cried Miſs Matthews? "ſure you raiſed more curioſity than you "have ſatisfied."

'Indeed, madam,' anſwered he, 'your reproof 'is juſt; I had like to have forgotten it; but you 'cannot wonder at me, when you reflect on that in-'tereſting part of my ſtory, which I am now relat-'ing.—But before I mention this accident, I muſt 'tell you what happened after Amelia's eſcape from 'her mother's houſe. Mrs. Harris at firſt ran out 'into the lane among her ſervants, and purſued us '(ſo ſhe imagined) along the road leading to the 'town; but that being very dirty, and the violent 'ſtorm of rain coming, ſhe took ſhelter in an ale-'houſe, about half a mile from her own houſe, 'whither ſhe ſent for her coach: ſhe then drove 'together with her daughter to town; where ſoon 'after her arrival, ſhe ſent for the doctor, her uſual 'privy counſellor in all her affairs. They ſat up 'all night together, the doctor endeavouring, by 'arguments and perſuaſions, to bring Mrs. Harris 'to reaſon; but all to no purpoſe, though, as he 'hath informed me, Miſs Betty ſeconded him with 'the warmeſt entreaties.'

Here Miſs Matthews laughed; of which Booth begged to know the reaſon; ſhe, at laſt, after many apologies, ſaid, "It was the firſt good thing ſhe "ever heard of Miſs Betty; nay," ſaid ſhe, "and "aſking your pardon for my opinion of your ſiſter, "ſince you will have it, I always conceived her to "be the deepeſt of hypocrites."

Booth fetched a ſigh, and ſaid, he was afraid ſhe had not always acted ſo kindly;—and then after a little heſitation proceeded.

'You will be pleaſed, madam, to remember, the 'lad was ſent with a verbal meſſage to the doctor; 'which meſſage was no more than to acquaint him

'where

'where we were, and to desire the favour of his 'company, or that he would send a coach to 'bring us to whatever place he would please to 'meet us at. This message was to be delivered to 'the doctor himself, and the messenger was order- 'ed, if he found him not at home, to go to him 'wherever he was. He fulfilled his orders, and 'told it to the doctor in the presence of Mrs. 'Harris.'

"Oh! the idiot," cries Miss Matthews. 'Not 'at all,' answered Booth: 'he is a very sensible 'fellow, as you will, perhaps, say hereafter. He 'had not the least reason to suspect that any secrecy 'was necessary: for we took the utmost care he 'should not suspect it.—Well, madam, this acci- 'dent, which appeared so unfortunate, turned in 'the highest degree to our advantage. Mrs. Har- 'ris no sooner heard the message delivered, than 'she fell into the most violent passion imaginable, 'and accused the doctor of being in the plot, and 'of having confederated with me in the design of 'carrying off her daughter.

'The doctor, who had hitherto used only sooth- 'ing methods, now talked in a different strain. He 'confessed the accusation, and justified his conduct. 'He said he was no meddler in the family affairs 'of others, nor should he have concerned himself 'with her's, but at her own request; but that since 'Mrs. Harris herself had made him an agent in 'this matter, he would take care to acquit himself 'with honour, and above all things to preserve a 'young lady for whom he had the highest esteem;' "for she is," cries he, and by heavens he said 'true, "the most worthy, generous, and noble of "all human beings." You have yourself, madam, 'said he, consented to the match. I have, at your 'request, made the match; and then he added 'some particulars relating to his opinion of me, 'which my modesty forbids me to repeat.'—"Nay "but," cries Miss Matthews, "I insist on your con- "quest of that modesty for once.—We women do "not love to hear one another's praises, and I will

" be made amends by hearing the praiſes of a man,
" and of a man, whom perhaps," added ſhe with a
leer, " I ſhall not think much the better of upon
' that account."—' In obedience to your commands
' then, madam,' continued he, ' the doctor was ſo
' kind to ſay, he had enquired into my character,
' and had found that I had been a dutiful ſon, and
' an affectionate brother. Relations, ſaid he, in
' which, whoever diſcharges his duty well, gives us
' a well-grounded hope, that he will behave as
' properly in all the reſt.——He concluded with
' ſaying, that Amelia's happineſs, her heart, nay,
' her very reputation, were all concerned in this
' matter, to which has he had been made inſtru-
' mental, he was reſolved to carry her through it;
' and then taking the licence from his pocket, de-
' clared to Mrs. Harris, that he would go that in-
' ſtant and marry her daughter wherever he found
' her. This ſpeech, the doctor's voice, his look,
' and his behaviour, all which are ſufficiently cal-
' culated to inſpire awe, and even terror, when he
' pleaſes, frightened poor Mrs. Harris, and wrought
' a more ſenſible effect than it was in his power to
' produce by all his arguments and entreaties; and
' I have already related what followed.

' Thus the ſtrange accident of our wanting pen,
' ink, and paper, and our not truſting the boy
' with our ſecret, occaſioned the diſcovery to Mrs.
' Harris: that diſcovery put the doctor upon his
' metal, and produced that bleſſed event which I
' have recounted to you, and which as my mother
' hath ſince confeſſed, nothing but the ſpirit which
' he had exerted after the diſcovery, could have
' brought about.

' Well, madam, you now ſee me married to
' Amelia; in which ſituation you will, perhaps,
' think my happineſs incapable of addition. Per-
' haps it was ſo; and yet I can with truth ſay, that
' the love which I then bore Amelia, was not com-
' parable to what I bear her now.'—" Happy Ame-
" lia!" cried Miſs Matthews. " If all men were
" like you, all women would be bleſſed; nay, the

" whole world would be ſo in a great meaſure: for " upon my ſoul, I believe that from the damned in- " conſtancy of your ſex to ours proceeds half the " miſeries of mankind."

That we may give the reader leiſure to conſider well the foregoing ſentiment, we will here put an end to this chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

In which our readers will probably be divided in their opinion of Mr. Booth's *conduct.*

BOOTH proceeded as follows:

' The firſt months of our marriage produced ' nothing remarkable enough to mention. I am ' ſure I need not tell Miſs Matthews that I found ' in my Amelia every perfection of human nature. ' Mrs. Harris at firſt gave us ſome little uneaſineſs. ' She had rather yielded to the doctor than given a ' willing conſent to the match; however, by de- ' grees, ſhe became more and more ſatisfied, and ' at laſt ſeemed perfectly reconciled. This we ' aſcribed a good deal to the kind offices of Miſs ' Betty, who had always appeared to be my friend. ' She had been greatly aſſiſting to Amelia in mak- ' ing her eſcape, which I had no opportunity of ' mentioning to you before, and in all things be- ' haved ſo well, outwardly at leaſt, to myſelf as ' well as her ſiſter, that we regarded her as our ſin- ' cereſt friend.

' About half a year after our marriage, two ad- ' ditional companies were added to our regiment, ' in one of which I was preferred to the command ' of a lieutenant. Upon this occaſion, Miſs Betty ' gave the firſt intimation of a diſpoſition which we ' have ſince too ſeverely experienced.'

" Your ſervant, ſir, ſays Miſs Matthews, " then " I find I was not miſtaken in my opinion of the " lady.—No, no, ſhew me any goodneſs in a ſen- " ſorious prude and"—

As Miſs Matthews heſitated for a ſimile or an execration, Booth proceeded: ' You will pleaſe to re-

'member, madam, there was formerly an agree-
'ment between myſelf and Mrs. Harris, that I
'ſhould ſettle all my Amelia's fortune on her, ex-
'cept a certain ſum, which was to be laid out in
'my advancement in the army; but as our mar-
'riage was carried on in the manner you have heard,
'no ſuch agreement was ever executed. And
'ſince I was become Amelia's huſband, not a word of
'this matter was ever mentioned by the old lady;
'and as for myſelf, I declare I had not yet awakened
'from that delicious dream of bliſs in which the
'poſſeſſion of Amelia had lulled me.'

Here Miſs Matthews ſighed, and caſt the tenderest of looks on Booth, who thus continued his ſtory:

'Soon after my promotion, Mrs. Harris one
'morning took an occaſion to ſpeak to me on this
'affair. She ſaid, that as I had been promoted
'gratis, to a lieutenancy, ſhe would aſſiſt me with
'money to carry me yet a ſtep higher: and if more
'was required than was formerly mentioned, it
'ſhould not be wanting, ſince ſhe was ſo perfectly
'ſatisfied with my behaviour to her daughter.
'Adding, that ſhe hoped I had ſtill the ſame in-
'clination to ſettle on my wife the remainder of her
'fortune.

'I anſwered with very warm acknowledgments
'of my mother's goodneſs, and declared if I had
'the world, I was ready to lay it at my Amelia's
'feet.—And ſo, heaven knows, I would ten thou-
'ſand worlds.

'Mrs. Harris ſeemed pleaſed with the warmth of
'my ſentiments, and ſaid, ſhe would immediately
'ſend to her lawyer and give him the neceſſary or-
'ders; and thus ended our converſation on this
'ſubject.

'From this time there was a very viſible altera-
'tion in Miſs Betty's behaviour. She grew re-
'ſerved to her ſiſter as well as to me. She was
'fretful and captious on the ſlighteſt occaſion;
'nay, ſhe affected much to talk on the ill conſe-
'quences of an imprudent marriage, eſpecially be-

'fore

'fore her mother; and if ever any little tender-
'neſs or endearments eſcaped me in public towards
'Amelia, ſhe never failed to make ſome malicious
'remark on the ſhort duration of violent paſſions;
'and when I have expreſſed a fond ſentiment for my
'wife, her ſiſter would kindly wiſh ſhe might hear
'as much ſeven years hence.

'All theſe matters have been ſince ſuggeſted to
'us by reflexion: for while they actually paſt, both
'Amelia and myſelf had our thoughts too happily
'engaged to take notice of what diſcovered itſelf in
'the mind of any other perſon.

'Unfortunately for us, Mrs. Harris's lawyer
'happened at this time to be at London, where
'buſineſs detained him upwards of a month; and
'as Mrs. Harris would on no occaſion employ any
'other, our affair was under an entire ſuſpenſion
'till his return.

'Amelia, who was now big with child, had often
'expreſſed the deepeſt concern at her apprehen-
'ſions of my being ſome time commanded abroad;
'a circumſtance which ſhe declared, if it ſhould
'ever happen to her, even though ſhe ſhould not
'then be in the ſame ſituation as at preſent, would
'infallibly break her heart. Theſe remonſtrances,
'were made with ſuch tenderneſs, and ſo much
'affected me, that to avoid any probability of ſuch
'an event, I endeavoured to get an exchange into
'the horſe-guards, a body of troops which very
'rarely goes abroad, unleſs where the king himſelf
'commands in perſon. I ſoon found an officer for
'my purpoſe, the terms were agreed on, and Mrs.
'Harris had ordered the money which I was to pay
'to be ready, notwithſtanding the oppoſition made
'by Miſs Betty, who openly diſſuaded her mother
'from it; alledging that the exchange was highly
'to my diſadvantage; that I could never hope to
'riſe in the army after it; not forgetting, at the
'ſame time, ſome inſinuations very prejudicial to
'my reputation as a ſoldier.

'When every thing was agreed on, and the two
'commiſſions were actually made out, but not

'ſigned

'signed by the king, one day, at my return from 'hunting, Amelia flew to me, and eagerly em- 'bracing me, cried out—"O Billy, I have news "for you, which delights my ſoul. Nothing ſure "was ever ſo fortunate as the exchange you have 'made. The regiment you was formerly in is or- "dered for Gibraltar."

'I received the news with far leſs tranſport than 'it was delivered. I anſwered coldly, ſince the 'caſe was ſo, I heartily hoped the commiſſions 'might be both ſigned. What do you ſay, replied 'Amelia eagerly?—ſure you told me every thing 'was entirely ſettled. That look of yours frightens 'me to death.—But I am running into too minute 'particulars. In ſhort, I received a letter by that 'very poſt, from the officer with whom I had ex- 'changed, inſiſting that though his majeſty had not 'ſigned the commiſſions, that ſtill the bargain was 'valid, partly urging it as a right, and partly de- 'ſiring it as a favour, that he might go to Gibraltar 'in my room.

'This letter convinced me in every point. I was 'now informed that the commiſſions were not 'ſigned, and conſequently that the exchange was 'not completed. Of conſequence the other could 'have no right to inſiſt on going; and as for grant- 'ing him ſuch a favour, I too clearly ſaw I muſt 'do it at the expence of my honour. I was now 'reduced to a dilemma, the moſt dreadful which I 'think any man can experience; in which I am not 'aſhamed to own, I found love was not ſo over- 'matched by honour as he ought to have been. 'The thoughts of leaving Amelia, in her preſent 'condition, to miſery, perhaps to death or mad- 'neſs, were inſupportable; nor could any other 'conſideration but that, which now tormented me 'on the other ſide, have combated them a mo- 'ment.'

"No woman upon earth," cries Miſs Matthews, "can deſpiſe want of ſpirit in a man more than "myſelf; and yet I cannot help thinking you was "rather too nice on this occaſion.'

'You

'You will allow, madam,' anſwered Booth, 'that whoever offends againſt the laws of honour 'in the leaſt inſtance, is treated as the higheſt delinquent. Here is no excuſe, no pardon; and he 'doth nothing who leaves any thing undone. But 'if the conflict was ſo terrible with myſelf alone, 'what was my ſituation in the preſence of Amelia? 'how could I ſupport her ſighs, her tears, her agonies, her deſpair! could I bear to think myſelf 'the cruel cauſe of her ſufferings, for ſo I was! 'could I endure the thought of having it in my 'power, to give her inſtant relief, for ſo it was, and 'refuſe it her!

'Miſs Betty was now again become my friend. 'She had ſcarce been civil to me for a fortnight laſt 'paſt, yet now ſhe commended me to the ſkies, 'and as ſeverely blamed her ſiſter, whom ſhe arraiged of the moſt contemptible weakneſs, in 'preferring my ſafety to my honour; ſhe ſaid many 'ill-natured things on the occaſion, which I ſhall 'not now repeat.

'In the midſt of this hurricane, the good doctor 'came to dine with Mrs. Harris, and at my deſire 'delivered his opinion on the matter.'

Here Mr. Booth was interrupted in his narrative, by the arrival of a perſon whom we ſhall introduce in the next chapter.

CHAP. IX.

Containing a ſcene of a different kind from any of the preceding.

THE gentleman who now arrived was the keeper; or if you pleaſe (for ſo he pleaſed to call himſelf) the governor of the priſon.

He uſed ſo little ceremony at his approach, that the bolt, which was very ſlight on the inſide, gave way, and the door immediately flew open. He had no ſooner entered the room than he acquainted Miſs Matthews that he had brought her very good news, for which he demanded a bottle of wine as his due.

This

This demand being complied with, he acquainted Miſs Mathews that the wounded gentleman was not dead, nor was his wound thought to be mortal: that loſs of blood, and, perhaps, his fright had occaſioned his fainting away; 'but I believe, 'madam,' ſaid he, 'if you take the proper meaſures, you may be bailed to-morrow. I expect 'the lawyer here this evening, and if you put 'the buſineſs into his hands, I warrant it will be 'done. Money to be ſure muſt be parted with, 'that's to be ſure. People to be ſure will expect 'to touch a little in ſuch caſes. For my own 'part, I never deſire to keep a priſoner longer 'than the law allows, not I: I always inform them 'they can be bailed as ſoon as I know it. I never 'make any bargain, not I; I always love to leave 'theſe things to the gentlemen and ladies themſelves. I never ſuſpect gentlemen and ladies of 'wanting generoſity.'

Miſs Mathews made a very ſlight anſwer to all thoſe friendly profeſſions. She ſaid ſhe had done nothing ſhe repented of, and was indifferent as to the event. 'All I can ſay,' cries ſhe, 'is, that if 'the wretch is alive, there is no greater villain in 'life than himſelf;' and inſtead of mentioning any thing of the bail, ſhe begged the keeper to leave her again alone with Mr. Booth. The keeper replied, 'nay, madam, perhaps it may be better to 'ſtay a little longer here, if you have not bail 'ready, than to buy them too dear. Beſides, a 'day or two hence, when the gentleman is paſt all 'danger of recovery, to be ſure ſome folks that 'would expect an extraordinary fee now, cannot 'expect to touch any thing. And to be ſure you 'ſhall want nothing here. The beſt of all things 'are to be had here for money, both eatable and 'drinkable; though I ſay it, I ſhan't turn my back 'to any of the taverns for either eatables or wine. 'The captain there need not have been ſo ſhy of 'owning himſelf when he firſt came in; we have 'had captains and other great gentlemen here be'fore now; and no ſhame to them, though I ſay

'it

'it. Many a great gentleman is ſometimes found 'in places that don't become them half ſo well, let 'me tell them that, Captain Booth, let me tell them 'that.'

'I ſee, ſir,' anſwered Booth a little diſcompoſed, 'that you are acquainted with my title as well as 'my name.'

'Ay, ſir,' cries the keeper, 'and I honour you 'the more for it. I love the gentlemen of the 'army. I was in the army myſelf formerly; in 'the lord of Oxford's horſe. It is true I rode pri-'vate; but I had money enough to have bought 'in quarter-maſter, when I took it into my head 'to marry, and my wife ſhe did not like that I 'ſhould continue a ſoldier, ſhe was all for a private 'life; and ſo I came to this buſineſs.

'Upon my word, ſir,' anſwered Booth, 'you 'conſulted your wife's inclinations very notably; 'but pray, will you ſatisfy my curioſity in telling 'me how you became acquainted that I was in the 'army? for my dreſs, I think, could not betray me.'

'Betray!' replied the keeper, 'there is no be-'traying here, I hope—I am not a perſon to betray 'people.—But you are ſo ſhy and peery, you would 'almoſt make one ſuſpect there was more in the 'matter. And if there be, I promiſe you, you 'need not be afraid of telling it me. You will ex-'cuſe me giving you a hint; but the ſooner the bet-'ter, that's all. Others may be before-hand with 'you, and firſt come firſt ſerved on theſe occaſions, 'that's all. Informers are odious, there's no doubt 'of that, and no one would care to be an informer 'if he could help it, becauſe of the ill uſage they 'always receive from the mob; yet it is dangerous 'to truſt too much; and when ſafety and a good 'part of the reward too are on one ſide, and the 'gallows on the other—I know which a wiſe man 'would chuſe.'

'What the devil do you mean by all this?' cries Booth.

'No offence, I hope,' anſwered the keeper; 'I 'ſpeak for your good, and if you have been upon

'the

'the ſnaffling lay—you underſtand me, I am 'ſure.'

'Not I,' anſwered Booth, 'upon my honour.'

'Nay, nay,' replied the keeper, with a contemptuous ſneer, 'if you are ſo peery as that comes 'to, you muſt take the conſequence.—But for my 'part, I know I would not truſt Robinſon with two-'pence untold.'

'What do you mean,' cries Booth? 'who is Ro-'binſon?'

'And you don't know Robinſon!' anſwered the keeper with great emotion. To which Booth replying in the negative; the keeper after ſome tokens of amazement, cried out; 'Well, captain, I muſt 'ſay you are the beſt at it, of all the the gentlemen 'I ever ſaw. However, I will tell you this: the 'lawyer and Mr. Robinſon have been laying their 'heads together about you above half an hour this 'afternoon. I overheard them mention Captain 'Booth ſeveral times; and for my part, I would 'not anſwer that Mr. Murphy is not now gone 'about the buſineſs; but if you will impeach any 'to me of the road, or any thing elſe, I will ſtep 'away to his worſhip Thraſher this inſtant, and I 'am ſure I have intereſt enough with him to get 'you admitted an evidence.'

'And ſo,' cries Booth, 'you really take me for a 'highwayman.'

'No offence, captain, I hope,' ſaid the keeper: 'as times go, there are many worſe men in the 'world than thoſe. Gentlemen may be driven to 'diſtreſs, and when they are, I know no more 'genteeler way than the road. It hath been many 'a brave man's caſe, to my knowledge, and men 'of as much honour too as any in the world.'

'Well, ſir,' ſaid Booth, 'I aſſure you I am not 'that gentleman of honour you imagine me.'

Miſs Mathews, who had long underſtood the keeper no better than Mr. Booth, no ſooner heard his meaning explained, than ſhe was fired with greater indignation than the gentleman had expreſſed. 'How 'dare you, ſir,' ſaid ſhe to the keeper, inſult a man

'of

'of faſhion, and who hath had the honour to bear 'his majeſty's commiſſion in the army, as you your-'ſelf own you know? If his misfortunes have ſent 'him hither, ſure we have no laws that will protect 'ſuch a fellow as you in inſulting him?'—'Fellow!' muttered the keeper—'I would not adviſe you, 'madam, to uſe ſuch language to me,'—'Do you 'dare threaten me,' replied Miſs Matthews in a rage; 'Venture in the leaſt inſtance to exceed your autho-'rity, with regard to me, and I will proſecute you 'with the utmoſt vengeance.'

A ſcene of very high altercation now enſued, till Booth interpoſed, and quieted the keeper, who was, perhaps, enough inclined to an accommodation; for, in truth, he waged unequal war. He was beſides unwilling to incenſe Miſs Mathews, whom he expected to be bailed out the next day, and who had more money left than he intended ſhe ſhould carry out of the priſon with her; and as for any violent or unjuſtifiable methods, the lady had diſcovered much too great a ſpirit to be in danger of them. The governour, therefore, in a very gentle tone, declared, that if he had given any offence to the gentleman, he heartily aſked his pardon; that if he had known him to be really a captain, he ſhould not have entertained any ſuch ſuſpicions; but the captain was a very common title in that place, and belonged to ſeveral gentlemen that had never been in the army, or at moſt had rid private like himſelf. 'To be ſure, captain,' ſaid he, 'as 'you yourſelf own, your dreſs is not very mili-'tary;' (for he had on a plain fuſtian ſuit) 'and be-'ſides, as the lawyer ſays, *noſcitur a ſoſir* is a very 'good rule. And I don't believe there is a greater 'raſcal upon earth than that ſame Robinſon that 'I was talking of. Nay, I aſſure you, I wiſh 'there may be no miſchief hatching againſt you. 'But if there is, I will do all I can with the lawyer 'to prevent it. To be ſure Mr. Murphy is one of 'the cleverеſt men in the world at the law: that 'even his enemies muſt own; and as I recommend 'him to all the buſineſs I can (and it is not a little

'to

'to be ſure that ariſes in this place) why, one good 'turn deſerves another. And I may expect that 'he will not be concerned in any plot to ruin any 'friend of mine; at leaſt when I deſire him not. 'I am ſure he could not be an honeſt man if he 'would.'

Booth was then ſatisfied that Mr. Robinſon, whom he did not yet know by name, was the gameſter who had won his money at play. And now, Miſs Matthews, who had very impatiently borne this long interruption, prevailed on the keeper to withdraw. As ſoon as he was gone, Mr. Booth began to felicitate her upon the news of the wounded gentleman being in a fair likelihood of recovery. To which, after ſhort ſilence, ſhe anſwered, 'there is ſomething, 'perhaps, which you will not eaſily gueſs, that 'makes your congratulation more agreeable to me 'than the firſt account I heard of the villain's having 'eſcaped the fate he deſerves: for, I do aſſure you, 'at firſt, it did not make me amends for the inter-'ruption of my curioſity. Now, I hope, we ſhall 'be diſturbed no more, till you have finiſhed your 'whole ſtory.—You left off, I think, ſomewhere in 'the ſtruggle about leaving Amelia, the happy 'Amelia'—'And can you call her happy at ſuch a 'period,' cries Booth? "Happy, ay, happy, in any "ſituation," anſwered Miſs Matthews, "with ſuch a "huſband. I, at leaſt, may well think ſo, who have "experienced the very reverſe of her fortune; but "I was not born to be happy. I may ſay with the "poet:

"The blackeſt ink of fate was ſure my lot,
"And when fate writ my name, it made a blot.

'Nay, nay, dear Miſs Mathews,' anſwered Booth, 'you muſt and ſhall baniſh ſuch gloomy thoughts. 'Fate hath, I hope, many happy days in ſtore for 'you.'——"Do you believe it, Mr. Booth," replied ſhe, "indeed you know the contrary—You muſt "know—For you can't have forgot. No Amelia in "the world can have quite obliterated—Forgetfulneſs "is not in our own power. If it was, indeed, I have

'reaſon

" reaſon to think—But I know not what I am ſaying.
" —Pray do proceed in that ſtory."

Booth ſo immediately complied with this requeſt, that it is poſſible he was pleaſed with it. To ſay the truth, if all which unwittingly dropped from Miſs Matthews was put together, ſome concluſions might, it ſeems, be drawn from the whole, which could not convey a very agreeable idea to a conſtant huſband. Booth therefore proceeded to relate what is written in the third book of this hiſtory.

AMELIA.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

In which Mr. Booth *reſumes his ſtory.*

'IF I am not miſtaken, madam,' continued Booth, 'I was juſt going to acquaint you with the 'doctor's opinion, when we were interrupted by the 'keeper.

'The doctor having heard counſel on both ſides, 'that is to ſay, Mrs. Harris for my ſtaying, and 'Miſs Betty for my going, at laſt delivered his own 'ſentiments. As for Amelia, ſhe ſat ſilent, drown-'ed in her tears; nor was I myſelf in a much better 'ſituation.

"As the commiſſions are not ſigned," 'ſaid the 'doctor,' "I think you may be ſaid to remain in "your former regiment; and therefore I think you "ought to go on this expedition; your duty to your "king and country, whoſe bread you have eaten, "requires it; and this is a duty of too high a "nature to admit the leaſt deficiency. Regard to "your character likewiſe requires you to go: for "the world, which may juſtly blame your ſtaying "at home, if the caſe was even fairly ſtated, will "not deal ſo honeſtly by you: you muſt expect to "have every circumſtance againſt you heightened, "and moſt of what makes for your defence omit-"ted; and thus you will be ſtigmatized as a coward, "without any palliation. As the malicious diſpo-"ſition of mankind is too well known, and the cruel

"pleaſure

" pleaſure which they take in deſtroying the repu-
" tations of others; the uſe we are to make of this
" knowledge is to afford no handle to reproach: for,
" bad as the world is, it ſeldom falls on any man
" who hath not given ſome ſlight cauſe for cenſure,
" though this, perhaps, is often aggravated ten
" thouſand fold; and when we blame the malice of
" the aggravation, we ought not to forget our own
" imprudence in giving the occaſion. Remember,
" my boy, your honour is at ſtake; and you know
" how nice the honour of a ſoldier is in theſe caſes.
" This is a treaſure, which he muſt be your enemy
" indeed, who would attempt to rob you of. There-
" fore you ought to conſider every one as your enemy,
" who, by deſiring you to ſtay, would rob you of
" your honour."

" Do you hear that, ſiſter?" ' cries Miſs Betty,'—
" Yes, I do hear it," ' anſwered Amelia, with more
' ſpirit than I ever ſaw her exert before,' " and
" would preſerve his honour at the expence of my
" life. I will preſerve it, if it ſhould be at that
" expence; and ſince it is Dr. Harriſon's opinion
" that he ought to go, I give my conſent. Go, my
" dear huſband," cried ſhe, falling upon her knees;
" may every angel of heaven guard and preſerve
" you."—' I cannot repeat her words without being
' affected,' ſaid he, wiping his eyes, ' the excel-
' lence of that woman, no words can paint; Miſs
' Matthews, ſhe hath every perfection in human
' nature.

' I will not tire you with the repetition of any
' more that paſt on that occaſion; nor with the
' quarrel that enſued between Mrs. Harris and the
' doctor; for the old lady could not ſubmit to my
' leaving her daughter in her preſent condition. She
' fell ſeverely on the army, and curſed the day in
' which her daughter was married to a ſoldier, not
' ſparing the doctor for having had ſome ſhare in the
' match. I will omit likewiſe the tender ſcene which
' paſt between Amelia and myſelf previous to my
' departure.

' Indeed

"Indeed I beg you would not," cries Miſs Matthews, "nothing delights me more than ſcenes of "tenderneſs. I ſhould be glad to know, if poſſible, "every ſyllable which was uttered on both ſides."

'I will indulge you then,' cries Booth, 'as far 'as is in my power. Indeed, I believe, I am able to 'recollect much the greateſt part; for the impreſſion 'is never to be effaced from my memory.'

He then proceeded as Miſs Matthews deſired; but leſt all our readers ſhould not be of her opinion, we will, according to our uſual cuſtom, endeavour to accommodate ourſelves to every taſte, and ſhall therefore place this ſcene in a chapter by itſelf, which we deſire all our readers who do not love, or who perhaps do not know the pleaſure of tenderneſs, to paſs over; ſince they may do this without any prejudice to the thread of the narrative.

CHAP. II.

Containing a ſcene of the tender kind.

'THE doctor, madam,' continued Booth, 'ſpent 'his evening at Mrs. Harris's houſe, where 'I ſat with him whilſt he ſmoaked his pillow pipe, 'as his phraſe is. Amelia was retired above half 'an hour to her chamber, before I went to her. At 'my entrance, I found her on her knees, a poſture 'in which I never diſturbed her. In a few minutes 'ſhe aroſe, came to me, and embracing me, ſaid, 'ſhe had been praying for reſolution to ſupport the 'cruelleſt moment ſhe had ever undergone, or could 'poſſibly undergo. I reminded her how much more 'bitter a farewell would be on a death-bed, when we 'could never meet, in this world at leaſt, again. I 'then endeavoured to leſſen all thoſe objects which 'alarmed her moſt, and particularly the danger I 'was to encounter; upon which head I ſeemed a 'little to comfort her;—but the probable length of 'my abſence, and the certain length of my voyage, 'were circumſtances which no oratory of mine could 'even palliate.' "Oh! heavens," ſaid ſhe, burſting into tears, "can I bear to think that hundreds,

" thouſands, for ought I know, of miles or leagues,
" that lands and ſeas are between us. What is the
" proſpect from that mount in our garden, where
" I have ſat ſo many happy hours with my Billy?
" what is the diſtance between that and the fartheſt
" hill which we ſee from thence, compared to the
" diſtance which will be between us? you cannot
" wonder at this idea; you muſt remember, my
" Billy, at this place, this very thought came for-
" merly into my foreboding mind. I then begged
" you to leave the army. Why would you not com-
" ply? did I not tell you then the ſmalleſt cottage
" we could ſurvey from the mount would be with
" you a paradiſe to me; it would be ſo ſtill, why
" can't my Billy think ſo? am I ſo much his ſu-
" perior in love? where is the diſhonour, Billy? or
" if there be any, will it reach our ears in our little
" hutt? are glory and fame, and not his Amelia,
" the happineſs of my huſband? go then, purchaſe
" them at my expence. You will pay a few ſighs,
" perhaps a few tears at parting, and then new
" ſcenes will drive away the thoughts of poor Ame-
" lia from your boſom; but what aſſiſtance ſhall I
" have in my affliction? not that any change of
" ſcene could drive you one moment from my re-
" membrance; yet here every object I behold will
" place your loved idea in the livelieſt manner be-
" fore my eyes. This is the bed in which you
" have repoſed; that is the chair on which you ſat.
" Upon theſe boards you have ſtood. Theſe books
" you have read to me. Can I walk among our beds
" of flowers without viewing your favourites, nay,
" thoſe which you have planted with your own hands?
" can I ſee one beauty from our beloved mount, which
" you have not pointed out to me?"—' Thus ſhe
' went on, the woman, madam, you ſee ſtill pre-
' vailing.'—" Since you mention it," ſays Miſs Mat-
thews, with a ſmile, " I own the ſame obſervation
" occurred to me. It is too natural to us to conſider
" ourſelves only, Mr. Booth "—' You ſhall hear,' he
cried,—' At laſt, the thoughts of her preſent con-
' dition ſuggeſted themſelves.'——" But if," ſaid

ſhe, " my ſituation, even in health, will be ſo in-
" tolerable, how ſhall I, in the danger and agonies
" of child-birth, ſupport your abſence!"—' Here ſhe
' ſtopped, and looking on me with all the tender-
' neſs imaginable, cried out,'—" And am I then ſuch
" a wretch to wiſh for your preſence at ſuch a ſea-
" ſon? ought I not to rejoice that you are out of
" the hearing of my cries, or the knowledge of my
" pains? if I die, will you not have eſcaped the hor-
" rors of a parting, ten thouſand times more dread-
" ful than this? Go, go, my Billy; the very circum-
" ſtance which made me moſt dread your departure,
" hath perfectly reconciled me to it. I perceive
" clearly now that I was only wiſhing to ſupport my
" own weakneſs with your ſtrength, and to relieve
" my own pains at the price of your's. Believe me,
" my love, I am aſhamed of myſelf."—' I caught
' her in my arms with raptures not to be expreſſed in
' words, called her my heroine; ſure none ever bet-
' ter deſerved that name; after which we remain-
' ed for ſome time ſpeechleſs, and locked in each
' other's embraces.'—" I am convinced," ſaid Miſs
Matthews, with a ſigh, " there are moments in life
" worth purchaſing with worlds."—

' At length the fatal morning came. I endeavour-
' ed to hide every pang of my heart, and to wear
' the utmoſt gaiety in my countenance. Amelia act-
' ed the ſame part. In theſe aſſumed characters we
' met the family at breakfaſt; at their breakfaſt, I
' mean: for we were both full already. The doctor
' had ſpent above an hour that morning in diſcourſe
' with Mrs. Harris, and had in ſome meaſure recon-
' ciled her to my departure. He now made uſe of
' every art to relieve the poor diſtreſſed Amelia; not
' by inveighing againſt the folly of grief, or by ſe-
' riouſly adviſing her not to grieve; both which were
' ſufficiently performed by Miſs Betty. The doctor,
' on the contrary, had recourſe to every means which
' might caſt a veil over the idea of grief, and raiſe
' comfortable images in my angel's mind. He en-
' deavoured to leſſen the ſuppoſed length of my ab-
' ſence, by diſcourſing on matters which were more

'distant in time. He said, he intended next year to 'rebuild a part of his parsonage-house.'—"And you, "captain," says he, "shall lay the corner stone, I "promise you," with many other instances of the 'like nature, which produced, I believe some good 'effect on us both.

'Amelia spoke but little; indeed more tears than 'words dropped from her; however, she seemed re-'solved to bear her affliction with resignation. But 'when the dreadful news arrived that the horses were 'ready, and I, having taken my leave of all the rest, 'at last approached her; she was unable to support 'the conflict with nature any longer; and clinging 'round my neck, she cried,—"Farewell, farewell for "ever: for I shall never, never, see you more." At 'which words the blood entirely forsook her lovely 'cheeks, and she became a lifeless corpse in my arms.

'Amelia continued so long motionless, that the 'doctor, as well as Mrs. Harris, began to be under 'the most terrible apprehensions: so they informed 'me afterwards; for at that time I was incapable of 'making any observation. I had indeed very little 'more use of my senses than the dear creature whom 'I supported. At length, however, we were all de-'livered from our fears; and life again visited the 'loveliest mansion that human nature ever afforded it.

'I had been, and yet was, so terrified with what 'had happened, and Amelia continued yet so weak 'and ill, that I determined, whatever might be the 'consequence, not to leave her that day: which re-'solution she was no sooner acquainted with, than 'she fell on her knees, crying, good Heaven, I thank 'thee for this reprieve at least. Oh! that every hour 'of my future life could be crammed into this dear 'day.

'Our good friend the doctor remained with us. 'He said, he had intended to visit a family in some 'affliction; but I don't know, says he, why I should 'ride a dozen miles after affliction, when we have 'enough here. Of all mankind the doctor is the 'best of comforters. As his excessive good-nature 'makes him take vast delight in the office; so his

92314

'great penetration into the human mind, joined to 'his great experience, renders him the moſt wonder- 'ful proficient in it; and he ſo well knows when to 'ſooth, when to reaſon, and when to ridicule, that 'he never applies any of thoſe arts improperly, 'which is almoſt univerſally the caſe with the phyſi- 'cians of the mind, and which it requires very great 'judgment and dexterity to avoid.

'The doctor principally applied himſelf to ridicu- 'ling the dangers of the ſiege, in which he ſucceed- 'ed ſo well, that he ſometimes forced a ſmile even 'into the face of Amelia. But what moſt comforted 'her, were the arguments he uſed to convince her of 'the probability of my ſpeedy, if not immediate re- 'turn. He ſaid, the general opinion was, that the 'place would be taken before our arrival there. In 'which caſe, we ſhould have nothing more to do, 'than to make the beſt of our way home again.

'Amelia was ſo lulled by theſe arts, that ſhe paſſed 'the day much better than I expected. Though the 'doctor could not make pride ſtrong enough to con- 'quer love; yet, he exalted the former to make ſome 'ſtand againſt the latter; inſomuch, that my poor 'Amelia, I believe, more than once, flattered her- 'ſelf, to ſpeak the language of the world, that her 'reaſon had gained an entire victory over her paſ- 'ſion; till love brought up a re-inforcement, if I 'may uſe that term, of tender ideas, and bore down 'all before him.

'In the evening, the doctor and I paſſed another 'half hour together, when he propoſed to me to en- 'deavour to leave Amelia aſleep in the morning, and 'promiſed me to be at hand when ſhe awaked, and 'to ſupport her with all the aſſiſtance in his power. 'He added, that nothing was more fooliſh, than for 'friends to take leave of each other. It is true, in- 'deed, ſays he, in the common acquaintance and 'friendſhip of the world, this is a very harmleſs ce- 'remony; but between two perſons who really love 'each other, the church of Rome never invented a 'penance half ſo ſevere as this, which we abſurdly 'impoſe on ourſelves.

'I greatly approved the doctor's propoſal; thank-
'ed him, and promiſed, if poſſible, to put it in exe-
'cution. He then ſhook me by the hand, and heartily
'wiſhed me well, ſaying, in his blunt way; "Well,
"boy, I hope to ſee thee crowned with laurels atthy
"return; one comfort I have, at leaſt, that ſtone walls
"and a ſea will prevent thee from running away."

'When I had left the doctor, I repaired to my
'Amelia, whom I found in her chamber, employed
'in a very different manner from what ſhe had been
'the preceeding night; ſhe was buſy in packing up
'ſome trinkets in a caſket, which ſhe deſired me to
'carry with me. This caſket was her own work,
'and ſhe had juſt faſtened it as I came to her.

'Her eyes very plainly diſcovered what had paſ-
'ſed while ſhe was engaged in her work; however,
'her countenance was now ſerene, and ſhe ſpoke,
'at leaſt, with ſome chearfulneſs. But after ſome
'time, "You muſt take care of this caſket, Billy,"
ſaid ſhe,—"You muſt indeed, Billy—for"—'here
'paſſion almoſt choaked her, till a flood of tears
'gave her relief, and then ſhe proceeded—"For I
"ſhall be the happieſt woman that ever was born
"when I ſee it again."—I told her, with the bleſſing
'of God that day would ſoon come.'—"Soon!" an-
ſwered ſhe,—"No, Billy, not ſoon; a week is an
"age:——but yet the happy day may come. It
"ſhall, it muſt, it will!—Yes, Billy, we ſhall meet,
"never to part again:—even in this world I hope."—
'Pardon my weakneſs, Miſs Matthews, but upon my
'ſoul I cannot help it.' cried he, wiping his eyes—
'Well, I wonder at your patience, and I will try it no
'longer. Amelia, tired out with ſo long a ſtruggle
'between variety of paſſions, and having not cloſed
'her eyes during three ſucceſſive nights, towards the
'morning fell into a profound ſleep. In which ſleep I
'left her—and having dreſſed myſelf with all the ex-
'pedition imaginable, ſinging, whiſtling, hurrying,
'attempting by every method to baniſh thought, I
'mounted my horſe, which I had over-night order-
'ed to be ready, and galloped away from that houſe
'where all my treaſure was depoſited.

'Thus, madam, I have, in obedience to your commands, run through a ſcene, which, if it hath been 'tireſome to you, you muſt acquit me of having 'obtruded upon you. This I am convinced of, that 'no one is capable of taſting ſuch a ſcene, who hath 'not a heart full of tenderneſs, and perhaps not even 'then, unleſs he hath been in the ſame ſituation.'

CHAP. III.

In which Mr. Booth *ſets forward on his journey.*

'WELL, madam, we have now taken our leave 'of Amelia. I rode a full mile before I once 'ſuffered myſelf to look back; but now being come 'to the top of a little hill, the laſt ſpot I knew which 'could give me a proſpect of Mrs. Harris's houſe, 'my reſolution failed; I ſtopped and caſt my eyes back-'ward. Shall I tell you what I felt at that inſtant? 'I do aſſure you I am not able. So many tender 'ideas crowded at once into my mind, that, if I may 'uſe the expreſſion, they almoſt diſſolved my heart. 'And now, madam, the moſt unfortunate accident 'came firſt into my head. This was, that I had in 'the hurry and confuſion left the dear caſket behind 'me. The thought of going back at firſt ſuggeſted 'itſelf; but the conſequences of that were too ap-'parent. I therefore reſolved to ſend my man, and 'in the mean time to ride on ſoftly on my road. He 'immediately executed my orders, and after ſome 'time, feeding my eyes with that delicious and yet 'heart-felt proſpect, I at laſt turned my horſe to de-'ſcend the hill, and proceeded about a hundred 'yards, when, conſidering with myſelf, that I ſhould 'loſe no time by a ſecond indulgence, I again turn-'ed back, and once more feaſted my ſight with the 'ſame painful pleaſure, till my man returned, bring-'ing me the caſket, and an account that Amelia ſtill 'continued in the ſweet ſleep I left her.—I now ſud-'denly turned my horſe for the laſt time, and with 'the utmoſt reſolution purſued my journey.

'I per-

'I perceived my man at his return—But before I 'mention any thing of him, it may be proper, 'madam, to acquaint you who he was. He was the 'foſter-brother of my Amelia. This young fellow 'had taken it into his head to go into the army; and 'he was deſirous to ſerve under my command. The 'doctor conſented to diſcharge him; his mother at 'laſt yielded to his importunities; and I was very 'eaſily prevailed on to inliſt one of the handſomeſt 'young fellows in England.

'You will eaſily believe I had ſome little partiality 'to one whoſe milk Amelia had ſucked; but as he 'had never ſeen the regiment, I had no opportunity 'to ſhow him any great mark of favour. Indeed he 'waited on me as my ſervant; and I treated him with 'all the tenderneſs which can be uſed to one in that 'ſtation.

'When I was about to change into the horſe-'guards, the poor fellow began to droop, fearing 'that he ſhould no longer be in the ſame corps with 'me, though certainly that would not have been the 'caſe. However, he had never mentioned one word 'of his diſſatisfaction. He is indeed a fellow of a 'noble ſpirit; but when he heard that I was to re-'main where I was, and that we were to go to 'Gibraltar together, he fell into tranſports of joy, 'little ſhort of madneſs. In ſhort, the poor fellow 'had imbibed a very ſtrong affection for me; though 'this was what I knew nothing of till long after.

'When he returned to me then, as I was ſaying, 'with the caſket, I obſerved his eyes all over blub-'bered with tears. I rebuked him a little too raſhly 'on this occaſion. Heyday! ſays I, what is the 'meaning of this; I hope I have not a milk-ſop with 'me. If I thought you would ſhow ſuch a face to the 'enemy I would leave you behind.—Your honour need 'not fear that, anſwered he; I ſhall find nobody there 'that I ſhall love well enough to make me cry. I was 'highly pleaſed with this anſwer, in which I thought 'I could diſcover both ſenſe and ſpirit. I then aſked 'him what had occaſioned thoſe tears ſince he had left 'me; (for he had no ſign of any at that time) and

'whether he had ſeen his mother at Mrs. Harris's. 'He anſwered in the negative, and begged that I 'would aſk him no more queſtions; adding, that he 'was not very apt to cry, and he hoped he ſhould 'never give me ſuch another opportunity of blaming him. I mention this only as an inſtance of his 'affection towards me, for I never could account for 'thoſe tears, any otherwiſe than by placing them to 'the account of the diſtreſs in which he left me at 'that time. We travelled full forty miles that day 'without baiting, when arriving at the inn were I 'intended to reſt that night, I retired immediately 'to my chamber, with my dear Amelia's caſket, 'the opening of which was the niceſt repaſt, and to 'which every other hunger gave way.

'It is impoſſible to mention to you all the little 'matters with which Amelia had furniſhed this caſket. 'It contained medicines of all kinds, which her mo'ther, who was the Lady Bountiful of that country, 'had ſupplied her with. The moſt valuable of all to 'me was a lock of her dear hair, which I have from 'that time to this worn in my boſom. What would 'I have then given for a little picture of my dear 'angel, which ſhe had loſt from her chamber about a 'month before? and which, we had the higheſt reaſon 'in the world to imagine her ſiſter had taken away: 'for the ſuſpicion lay only between her and Amelia's 'maid, who was of all creatures the honeſteſt, and 'whom her miſtreſs had often truſted with things of 'much greater value: for the picture, which was ſet 'in gold, and had two or three little diamonds round 'it, was worth about twelve guineas only; whereas 'Amelia left jewels in her care of much greater 'value.'

"Sure," cries Miſs Matthews, "ſhe could not be "ſuch a paltry pilferer."

'Not on account of the gold or the jewels,' cries Booth. 'We imputed it to mere ſpite, with which 'I aſſure you ſhe abounds; and ſhe knew that next to 'Amelia herſelf, there was nothing which I valued 'ſo much as this little picture: for ſuch a reſemblance 'did it bear of the original, that Hogarth himſelf did

'never

'never, I believe, draw a ſtronger likeneſs. Spite 'therefore was the only motive to this cruel depre-'dation; and indeed her behaviour on the occaſion 'ſufficiently convinced us both of the juſtice of our 'ſuſpicion, though we neither of us durſt accuſe her; 'and ſhe herſelf had the aſſurance to inſiſt very ſtrongly '(though ſhe could not prevail) with Amelia to turn 'away her innocent maid, ſaying, ſhe would not live 'in the houſe with a thief.'

Miſs Matthews now diſcharged ſome curſes on Miſs Betty, not much worth repeating, and then Mr. Booth proceeded in his relation.

CHAP IV.

A ſea piece.

'THE next day we joined the regiment, which 'was ſoon after to embark. Nothing but mirth 'and jollity were in the countenance of every officer 'and ſoldier; and as I now met ſeveral friends whom 'I had not ſeen for above a year before, I paſſed ſe-'veral happy hours, in which poor Amelia's image 'ſeldom obtruded itſelf to interrupt my pleaſure. To 'confeſs the truth, dear Miſs Matthews, the tendereſt 'of paſſions is capable of ſubſiding; nor is abſence 'from our deareſt friends ſo unſupportable as it may 'at firſt appear. Diſtance of time and place do really 'cure what they ſeem to aggravate; and taking leave 'of our friends reſembles taking leave of the world; 'concerning which it hath been often ſaid, that it is 'not death, but dying which is terrible.'—Here Miſs Matthews burſt into a fit of laughter, and cried, "I "ſincerely aſk your pardon; but I cannot help laugh-"ing at the gravity of your philoſophy." Booth anſwered, that the doctrine of the paſſions had been always his favourite ſtudy; that he was convinced every man acted entirely from that paſſion which was uppermoſt; 'Can I then think,' ſaid he, 'with-'out entertaining the utmoſt contempt for myſelf, 'that any pleaſure upon earth could drive the thoughts 'of Amelia one inſtant from my mind?

'At length we embarked aboard a tranſport, and 'ſailed for Gibraltar; but the wind, which was at firſt 'fair, ſoon chopped about; ſo that we were obliged, 'for ſeveral days, to beat to windward, as the ſea 'phraſe is. During this time, the taſte which I had 'of a ſea-faring life did not appear extremely agree-'able. We rolled up and down in a little narrow 'cabbin, in which were three officers, all of us ex-'tremely ſea ſick; our ſickneſs being much aggra-'vated by the motion of the ſhip, by the view of each 'other, and by the ſtench of the men. But this was 'but a little taſte indeed of the miſery which was to 'follow: for we were got about ſix leagues to the weſt-'ward of Scilly, when a violent ſtorm aroſe at north-'eaſt, which ſoon raiſed the waves to the heighth of 'mountains. The horror of this is not to be ade-'quately deſcribed to thoſe who have never ſeen the 'like. The ſtorm began in the evening, and as the 'clouds brought on the night apace, it was ſoon en-'tirely dark; nor had we, during many hours, any 'other light than what was cauſed by the jarring ele-'ments, which frequently ſent forth flaſhes, or rather 'ſtreams of fire; and whilſt theſe preſented the moſt 'dreadful objects to our eyes, the roaring of the 'winds, the daſhing of the waves againſt the ſhip and 'each other, formed a ſound altogether as horrible for 'our ears; while our ſhip, ſometimes lifted up as it 'were to the ſkies, and ſometimes ſwept away at once 'as into the loweſt abyſs, ſeemed to be the ſport of 'the winds and ſeas. The captain himſelf almoſt 'gave all for loſt, and expreſſed his apprehenſion of 'being inevitably caſt on the rocks of Scilly, and 'beat to pieces. And now, while ſome on board 'were addreſſing themſelves to the Supreme Being, 'and others applying for comfort to ſtrong liquors, my 'whole thoughts were entirely engaged by my Amelia. 'A thouſand tender ideas crowded into my mind. I 'can truly ſay, that I had not a ſingle conſideration 'about myſelf, in which ſhe was not concerned. 'Dying to me was leaving her; and the fear of never 'ſeeing her more was a dagger ſtuck in my heart. 'Again, all the terrors with which this ſtorm, if it

'reached

'reached her ears, muſt fill her gentle mind on my 'account, and the agonies which ſhe muſt undergo, 'when ſhe heard of my fate, gave me ſuch intolerable 'pangs, that I now repented my reſolution, and wiſh-'ed, I own I wiſhed, that I had taken her advice, 'and preferred love and a cottage to all the dazzling 'charms of honour.

'While I was tormenting myſelf with theſe me-'ditations, and had concluded myſelf as certainly 'loſt, the maſter came into the cabbin, and with a 'chearful voice, aſſured us that we had eſcaped the 'danger, and that we had certainly paſſed to the weſt-'ward of the rock. This was comfortable news to 'all preſent; and my captain, who had been ſome 'time on his knees, leapt ſuddenly up, and teſtified 'his joy with a great oath.

'A perſon unuſed to the ſea would have been 'aſtoniſhed at the ſatisfaction which now diſcovered 'itſelf in the maſter or in any on board: for the 'ſtorm ſtill raged with great violence, and the day-'light which now appeared, preſented us with ſights 'of horror ſufficient to terrify minds which were not 'abſolute ſlaves to the paſſion of fear; but ſo great is 'the force of habit, that what inſpires a landman 'with the higheſt apprehenſion of danger, gives not 'the leaſt concern to a ſailor, to whom rocks and 'quick-ſands are almoſt the only objects of terror.

'The maſter, however, was a little miſtaken in the 'preſent inſtance; for he had not left the cabbin above 'an hour, before my man came running to me, and 'acquainted me that the ſhip was half full of water; 'that the ſailors were going to hoiſt out the boat and 'ſave themſelves, and begged me to come that mo-'ment along with him, as I tendered my preſervation. 'With this account, which was conveyed to me in a 'whiſper, I acquainted both the captain and enſign; 'and we all together immediately mounted the deck, 'where we found the maſter making uſe of all his ora-'tory to perſuade the ſailors that the ſhip was in no 'danger; and at the ſame time employed all his 'authority to ſet the pumps a-going, which he aſſured 'them would keep the water under and ſave his

'dear Lovely Peggy, (for that was the name of 'the ſhip) which he ſwore he loved as dearly as his 'own ſoul.

'Indeed this ſufficiently appeared; for the leak was 'ſo great, and the water flowed in ſo plentifully, that 'his Lovely Peggy was half filled, before he could 'be brought to think of quitting her; but now the 'boat was brought along-ſide the ſhip; and the 'maſter himſelf, notwithſtanding all his love for her, 'quitted his ſhip; and leapt into the boat. Every 'man preſent attempted to follow his example, when 'I heard the voice of my ſervant roaring forth my 'name in a kind of agony. I made directly to the 'ſhip ſide, but was too late: for the boat being al-'ready over laden, put directly off. And now, ma-'dam, I am going to relate to you an inſtance of 'heroic affection in a poor fellow towards his maſter, 'to which love itſelf, even among perſons of ſuperior 'education, can produce but few ſimilar inſtances. 'My poor man being unable to get me with him into 'the boat, leapt ſuddenly into the ſea, and ſwam 'back to the ſhip; and when I gently rebuked him 'for his raſhneſs, he anſwered, he choſe rather to die 'with me, than to live to carry the account of my 'death to my Amelia; at the ſame time burſting into 'a flood of tears, he cried, "Good Heavens! what "will that poor lady feel when ſhe hears of this!" 'This tender concern for my dear love endeared the 'poor fellow more to me than the gallant inſtance 'which he had juſt before given of his affection to-'wards myſelf.

'And now, madam, my eyes were ſhocked with 'a ſight, the horror of which can ſcarce be imagined: 'for the boat had ſcarce got four hundred yards from 'the ſhip, when it was ſwallowed up by the mercileſs 'waves, which now ran ſo high, that out of the num-'ber of perſons which were in the boat none reco-'vered the ſhip; though many of them we ſaw miſe-'rably periſh before our eyes, ſome of them very 'near us, without any poſſibility of giving them the 'leaſt aſſiſtance.

'But

'But whatever we felt for them, we felt, I believe, 'more for ourſelves, expecting every minute when we 'ſhould ſhare the ſame fate. Among the reſt, one of 'our officers appeared quite ſtupified with fear. I 'never indeed ſaw a more miſerable example of the 'great power of that paſſion: I muſt not, however, 'omit doing him juſtice, by ſaying that I afterwards 'ſaw the ſame man behave well in an engagement, 'in which he was wounded. Though there likewiſe 'he was ſaid to have betrayed the ſame paſſion of 'fear in his countenance.

'The other of our officers was no leſs ſtupified (if 'I may ſo expreſs myſelf) with fool hardineſs, and 'ſeemed almoſt inſenſible of his danger. To ſay the 'truth, I have, from this and ſome other inſtances 'which I have ſeen, been almoſt inclined to think, 'that the courage as well as cowardice of fools pro-'ceeds from not knowing what is or what is not the 'proper object of fear: indeed, we may account for 'the extreme hardineſs of ſome men, in the ſame 'manner as for the terrors of children at a bugbear. 'The child knows not but that the bugbear is the pro-'per object of fear, the blockhead knows not that a 'cannon ball is ſo.

'As to the remaining part of the ſhip's crew, and 'the ſoldiery, moſt of them were dead drunk; and 'the reſt were endeavouring, as faſt as they could, to 'prepare for death in the ſame manner.

'In this dreadful ſituation we were taught that no 'human condition ſhould inſpire men with abſolute 'deſpair; for as the ſtorm had ceaſed for ſome time, 'the ſwelling of the ſea began conſiderably to abate; 'and we now perceived the man of war which con-'voyed us, at no great diſtance a-ſtern. Thoſe aboard 'her eaſily perceived our diſtreſs, and made towards 'us. When they came pretty near, they hoiſted out 'two boats to our aſſiſtance. Theſe no ſooner ap-'proached the ſhip, than they were inſtantaneouſly fill-'ed, and I myſelf got a place in one of them, chiefly 'by the aid of my honeſt ſervant, of whoſe fidelity to 'me on all occaſions I cannot ſpeak or think too 'highly. Indeed I got into the boat ſo much the

'more

'more eaſily as a great number on board the ſhip were 'rendered by drink incapable of taking any care for 'themſelves. There was time, however, for the 'boat to paſs and repaſs; ſo that when we came to 'call over names, three only, of all that remained 'in the ſhip, after the loſs of her own boat, were 'miſſing.

'The captain, enſign, and myſelf, were received 'with many congratulations by our officers on board 'the man of war.—The ſea officers too, all except 'the captain, paid us their compliments, though 'theſe were of the rougher kind, and not without 'ſeveral jokes of our eſcape. As for the captain him-'ſelf, we ſcarce ſaw him during many hours; and 'when he appeared, he preſented a view of majeſty 'beyond any that I had ever ſeen. The dignity which 'he preſerved, did indeed give me rather the idea of 'a Mogul, or a Turkiſh emperor, than of any of the 'monarchs of Chriſtendom. To ſay the truth, I 'could reſemble his walk on the deck to nothing but 'to the image of Captain Gulliver ſtrutting among the 'Lilliputians; he ſeemed to think himſelf a being of 'an order ſuperior to all around him, and more eſpe-'cially to us of the land ſervice. Nay, ſuch was 'the behaviour of all the ſea officers and ſailors to 'us and our ſoldiers, that inſtead of appearing to 'be ſubjects of the ſame prince, engaged in one 'quarrel, and joined to ſupport one cauſe; we 'landmen rather ſeemed to be captives on board an 'enemy's veſſel. This is a grievous misfortune, 'and often proves ſo fatal to the ſervice, that it 'is great pity ſome means could not be found of 'curing it.'

Here Mr. Booth ſtopped a while, to take breath. We will therefore give the ſame refreſhment to the reader.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The arrival of Booth *at* Gibraltar, *with what there befel him.*

'THE adventures,' continued Booth, 'which happened to me from this day till my arrival at Gibralter, are not worth recounting to you. After a voyage, the remainder of which was tolerably proſperous, we arrived in that garriſon, the natural ſtrength of which is ſo well known to the whole world.

'About a week after my arrival, it was my fortune to be ordered on a ſally-party, in which my left leg was broke with a muſquet ball; and I ſhould moſt certainly have either periſhed miſerably, or muſt have owed my preſervation to ſome of the enemy, had not my faithful ſervant carried me off on his ſhoulders, and afterwards, with the aſſiſtance of one of his comrades, brought me back into the garriſon.

'The agony of my wound was ſo great, that it threw me into a fever, from whence my ſurgeon apprehended much danger. I now began again to feel for my Amelia, and for myſelf on her account: and the diſorder of my mind occaſioned by ſuch melancholy contemplations, very highly aggravated the diſtemper of my body; inſomuch, that it would probably have proved fatal, had it not been for the friendſhip of one Captain James, an officer of our regiment, and an old acquaintance, who is undoubtedly one of the pleaſanteſt companions, and one of the beſt-natured men in the world. This worthy man, who had a head and a heart perfectly adequate to every office of friendſhip, ſtayed with me almoſt day and night during my illneſs, and by ſtrengthening my hopes, raiſing my ſpirits, and cheering my thoughts, preſerved me from deſtruction.

'The behaviour of this man alone is a ſufficient proof of the truth of my doctrine, that all men act entirely from their paſſions; for Bob James can never be ſuppoſed to act from any motive of

'virtue

'virtue and religion; ſince he conſtantly laughs at 'both; and yet his conduct towards me alone de-'monſtrates a degree of goodneſs, which, perhaps, 'few of the votaries of either virtue or religion 'can equal.'

"You need not take much pains," anſwered Miſs Matthews with a ſmile, "to convince me of your "doctrine. I have been always an advocate for the "ſame. I look upon the two words you mention, "to ſerve only as cloaks under which hypocriſy "may be the better enabled to cheat the world. I "have been of that opinion ever ſince I read that "charming fellow Mandevil."

'Pardon me, madam,' anſwered Booth, 'I hope 'you do not agree with Mandevil neither, who 'hath repreſented human nature in a picture of the 'higheſt deformity. He hath left out of his ſyſtem 'the beſt paſſion which the mind can poſſeſs, and 'attempts to derive the effects or energies of that 'paſſion, from the baſe impulſes of pride or fear. 'Whereas, it is as certain that love exiſts in the mind 'of man, as that its oppoſite hatred doth, and the 'ſame reaſons will equally prove the exiſtence of the 'one as the exiſtence of the other.'

"I don't know, indeed," replied the lady, "I ne-"ver thought much about the matter. This I know, "that when I read Mandevil, I thought all he ſaid "was true; and I have been often told, that he "proves religion and virtue to be only mere names. "However, if he denies there is any ſuch thing as "love, that is moſt certainly wrong.—I am afraid I "can give him the lye myſelf."

'I will join with you, madam, in that,' anſwered Booth, 'at any time.'

"Will you join with me?" anſwered ſhe, looking eagerly at him—"O Mr. Booth, I know not what I "was going to ſay—What—Where did you leave "off?—I would not interrupt you—but I am impa-"tient to know ſomething."

'What, madam?' cries Booth, 'if I can give you 'any ſatisfaction'——

"No,

"No, no," ſaid ſhe, 'I muſt hear all, I would "not for the world break the thread of your ſtory "—Beſides, I am afraid to aſk—Pray, pray, Sir, "go on."

'Well, madam, cries Booth, 'I think I was 'mentioning the extraordinary acts of friendſhip 'done me by Captain James; nor can I help tak-'ing notice of the almoſt unparalleled fidelity of 'poor Atkinſon (for that was my man's name) who 'was not only conſtant in the aſſiduity of his atten-'dance, but, during the time of my danger, demon-'ſtrated a concern for me which I can hardly account 'for, as my prevailing on his captain to make him 'a ſerjeant was the firſt favour he ever received at 'my hands, and this did not happen till I was al-'moſt perfectly recovered of my broken leg. Poor 'fellow! I ſhall never forget the extravagant joy his 'halbert gave him; I remember it the more, be-'cauſe it was one of the happieſt days of my own 'life; for it was upon this day that I received a 'letter from my dear Amelia, after a long ſilence, 'acquainting me that ſhe was out of all danger from 'her lying in.

'I was now once more able to perform my duty; 'when (ſo unkind was the fortune of war) the ſecond 'time I mounted the guard, I received a violent 'contuſion from the burſting of a bomb. I was 'felled to the ground, where I lay breathleſs by the 'blow, till honeſt Atkinſon came to my aſſiſtance, 'and conveyed me to my room, where a ſurgeon 'immediately attended me.

'The injury I had now received, was much more 'dangerous in my ſurgeon's opinion than the for-'mer; it cauſed me to ſpit blood, and was attended 'with a fever, and other bad ſymptoms; ſo that 'very fatal conſequences were apprehended.

'In this ſituation the image of my Amelia haunted 'me day and night; and the apprehenſions of never 'ſeeing her more were ſo intolerable, that I had 'thoughts of reſigning my commiſſion, and returning 'home, weak as I was, that I might have, at leaſt, 'the ſatisfaction of dying in the arms of my love.

'Captain

'Captain James, however, perſiſted in diſſuading me 'from any ſuch reſolution. He told me my honour 'was too much concerned, attempted to raiſe my 'hopes of recovery to the utmoſt of his power; but 'chiefly he prevailed on me by ſuggeſting, that if 'the worſt which I apprehended, ſhould happen, it 'was much better for Amelia, that ſhe ſhould be 'abſent than preſent in ſo melancholy an hour.'

"I know," cried he, "the extreme joy which muſt "ariſe in you from meeting again with Amelia, "and the comfort of expiring in her arms; but con-"ſider what ſhe herſelf muſt endure upon the dread-"ful occaſion, and you would not wiſh to purchaſe "any happineſs at the price of ſo much pain to her."

'This argument, at length, prevailed on me; and 'it was after many long debates reſolved, that ſhe 'ſhould not even know my preſent condition till 'my doom either for life or death was abſolutely 'fixed.'

"Oh! Heavens! how great! how generous!" cried Miſs Matthews. "Booth, thou art a noble "fellow; and I ſcarce think there is a woman upon "earth worthy ſo exalted a paſſion."

Booth made a modeſt anſwer to the compliment which Miſs Matthews had paid him. This drew more civilities from the lady; and theſe again more acknowledgments. All which we ſhall paſs by, and proceed with our hiſtory.

CHAP. VI.

Containing matters which will pleaſe ſome readers.

'TWO months and more, had I continued in 'a ſtate of incertainty, ſometimes with more 'flattering, and ſometimes with more alarming ſymp-'toms; when one afternoon poor Atkinſon came 'running into my room, all pale and out of breath, 'and begged me not to be ſurprized at his news. 'I aſked him eagerly what was the matter, and if 'it was any thing concerning Amelia.—I had ſcarce 'uttered the dear name, when ſhe herſelf ruſhed into

'the

'the room, and ran haſtily to me, crying,' "Yes, "it is, it is your Amelia herſelf."

'There is nothing ſo difficult to deſcribe, and 'generally ſo dull when deſcribed, as ſcenes of ex-'ceſſive tenderneſs.'

"Can you think ſo?' ſays Miſs Matthews, "ſurely "there is nothing ſo charming!—O! Mr. Booth, "our ſex is d—ned by the want of tenderneſs in "yours—O were they all like you—certainly no man "was ever your equal."

'Indeed, madam,' cries Booth, 'you honour me 'too much—But—well—when the firſt tranſports 'of our meeting were over, Amelia began gently 'to chide me for having concealed my illneſs from 'her; for in three letters which I had writ her ſince 'the accident had happened, there was not the leaſt 'mention of it, or any hint given by which ſhe 'could poſſibly conclude I was otherwiſe than in 'perfect health. And when I had excuſed myſelf, 'by aſſigning the true reaſon, ſhe cried,—"O Mr. "Booth! and do you know ſo little of your Amelia, "as to think I could or would ſurvive you!—would "it not be better for one dreadful fight to break my "heart all at once, than to break it by degrees?— "O Billy! can any thing pay me for the loſs of "this embrace?"——'But I aſk your pardon—— 'how ridiculous doth my fondneſs appear in your 'eyes!'

"How often," anſwered ſhe, "ſhall I aſſert the "contrary?——What would you have me ſay, Mr. "Booth? ſhall I tell you I envy Mrs. Booth of all "the women in the world? would you believe me if "I did? I hope you—What am I ſaying!—Pray "make no farther apology, but go on."

'After a ſcene,' continued he, 'too tender to be 'conceived by many, Amelia informed me that ſhe 'had received a letter from an unknown hand, 'acquainting her with my misfortune, and adviſing 'her, if ſhe ever deſired to ſee me more, to come 'directly to Gibraltar. She ſaid, ſhe ſhould not 'have delayed a moment after receiving this letter, 'had not the ſame ſhip brought her one from me

'written

" moment. I ſhould have leaped into the firſt fiſh-
" ing-boat I could have found, and bid defiance to
" the winds and waves ——O there is no true tender-
" neſs but in a woman of ſpirit. I would not be
" underſtood all this while to reflect on Mrs. Booth.
" I am only defending the cauſe of my ſex; for upon
" my ſoul ſuch compliments to a wife are a ſatire on
" all the reſt of womankind."

'Sure you jeſt, Miſs Matthews,' anſwered Booth, with a ſmile. 'However, if you pleaſe, I will pro-
'ceed in my ſtory.'

CHAP. VII.

The captain continuing his ſtory, recounts ſome particulars which we doubt not, to many good people, will appear unnatural.

'I WAS ſcarce ſooner recovered from my indiſ-
'poſition than Amelia herſelf fell ill. This, I am
'afraid, was occaſioned by the fatigues which I could
'not prevent her from undergoing on my account;
'for as my diſeaſe went off with violent ſweats, dur-
'ing which the ſurgeon ſtrictly ordered that I ſhould
'lie by myſelf, my Amelia could not be prevailed
'upon to ſpend many hours in her own bed. During
'my reſtleſs fits ſhe would ſometimes read to me
'ſeveral hours together; indeed it was not without
'difficulty that ſhe ever quitted my bed-ſide. Theſe
'fatigues, added to the uneaſineſs of her mind, over-
'powered her weak ſpirits, and threw her into one
'of the worſt diſorders that can poſſible attend a
'woman. A diſorder very common among the la-
'dies, and our phyſicians have not agreed upon its
'name. Some call it the fever on the ſpirits, ſome
'a nervous fever, ſome the vapours, and ſome the
'hyſterics.'

" O ſay no more," cries Miſs Matthews, " I pity
" you, I pity you from my ſoul. A man had better
" be plagued with all the curſes of Egypt than with
" a vapouriſh wife."

'Pity me, madam!' anſwered Booth, 'pity rather
'that dear creature, who, from her love and care of
'my

" —that could not be neither: for then ſhe would " not have doubted whether ſhe ſhould leave dear " England on the receipt of the letter.—No, it muſt " have been by ſome other means;—yet that I owned " appeared extremely natural to me; for if I had been " left by ſuch a huſband, I think I ſhould have pur- " ſued the ſame method."

' No, madam,' cried Booth, ' it muſt have been ' conveyed by ſome other channel; for my Amelia, ' I am certain, was entirely ignorant of the man- ' ner; and as for poor Atkinſon, I am convinced he ' would not have ventured to take ſuch a ſtep without ' acquainting me. Beſides, the poor fellow had, I ' believe, ſuch a regard for my wife, out of gra- ' titude for the favours ſhe had done his mother, that ' I make no doubt he was highly rejoiced at her ' abſence from my melancholy ſcene. Well, whoever ' writ it, is a matter very immaterial; yet as it ſeem- ' ed ſo odd and unaccountable an incident, I could ' not help mentioning it.

' From the time of Amelia's arrival, nothing re- ' markable happened till my perfect recovery, un- ' leſs I ſhould obſerve her remarkable behaviour, ' ſo full of care and tenderneſs that it was perhaps ' without a parallel.'

" O no, Mr. Booth,' cries the lady—" It is fully " equalled, I am ſure, by your gratitude. There is " nothing, I believe, ſo rare as gratitude in your ſex, " eſpecially in huſbands. So kind a remembrance is, " indeed, more than a return to ſuch an obligation: " for where is the mighty obligation which a woman " confers, who being poſſeſſed of an ineſtimable jewel " is ſo kind to herſelf as to be careful and tender of " it? I do not ſay this to leſſen your opinion of " Mrs. Booth. I have no doubt but that ſhe loves " you as well as ſhe is capable. But I would not " have you think ſo meanly of our ſex, as to imagine " there are not a thouſand women ſuſceptible of true " tenderneſs towards a meritorious man.—Believe me, " Mr. Booth, if I had received ſuch an account of an " accident having happened to ſuch a huſband, a " mother and a parſon would not have held me a

" moment,

" the exceſs of a mother's tenderneſs, and furniſhed
" you with no leſs than fifty pounds for your fooliſh
" voyage. How can ſhe then be otherwiſe than ſur-
" priſed at your preſent demand? which, ſhould ſhe
" be ſo weak to comply with, ſhe muſt expect to be
" every month repeated, in order to ſupply the ex-
" travagance of a young rakiſh officer.— You ſay ſhe
" will compaſſionate your ſufferings; yes, ſurely ſhe
" doth greatly compaſſionate them, and ſo do I too,
" though you was neither ſo kind, nor ſo civil as to
" ſuppoſe I ſhould. But I forgive all your ſlights to
" me, as well now as formerly. Nay, I not only
" forgive, but I pray daily for you.—But, dear ſiſter,
" what could you expect leſs than what hath happen-
" ed? you ſhould have believed your friends, who
" were wiſer and older than you. I do not here mean
" myſelf, though I own I am eleven months and ſome
" odd weeks your ſuperior, though, had I been
" younger, I might, perhaps, have been able to ad-
" viſe you: for wiſdom, and what ſome may call
" beauty, do not always go together. You will
" not be offended at this: for I know in your heart
" you have always held your head above ſome peo-
" ple, whom perhaps other people have thought
" better of; but why do I mention what I ſcorn ſo
" much?—No, my dear ſiſter, Heaven forbid it
" ſhould ever be ſaid of me, that I value myſelf upon
" my face—not but if I could believe men perhaps
" —but I hate and deſpiſe men—you know I do,
" my dear, and I wiſh you had deſpiſed them as
" much; but *jacta eſt alea*, as the doctor ſays.——
" You are to make the beſt of your fortune. What
" fortune I mean my mama may pleaſe to give
" you: for you know all is in her power. Let me
" adviſe you then to bring your mind to your cir-
" cumſtances, and remember (for I can't help writ-
" ing it, as it is for your own good) the vapours
" are a diſtemper which very ill become a knapſack.
" Remember, my dear, what you have done; remem-
" ber what my mama hath done; remember we
" have ſomething of yours to keep, and do not con-
" ſider

'ſider yourſelf as an only child——No, nor as a 'favourite child; but be pleaſed to remember,

"Dear ſiſter,

"Your moſt affectionate ſiſter,

"And moſt obedient humble ſervant,

"E. HARRIS."

"O brave Miſs Betty," cried Miſs Matthews, "I "always held her in high eſteem; but I proteſt ſhe "exceeds even what I could have expected from "her."

'This letter, madam,' cries Booth, 'you will 'believe was an excellent cordial for my poor wife's 'ſpirits. So dreadful indeed was the effect it had 'upon her, that as ſhe had read it in my abſence, 'I found her at my return home in the moſt violent 'fits; and ſo long was it before ſhe recovered her 'ſenſes, that I deſpaired of that bleſt event ever hap-'pening, and my own ſenſes very narrowly eſcaped 'from being ſacrificed to my deſpair. However, ſhe 'came at laſt to herſelf, and I began to conſider of 'every means of carrying her immediately to Mont-'pelier, which was now become much more neceſſary 'than before.

'Though I was greatly ſhocked at the barbarity 'of the letter; yet I apprehended no very ill conſe-'quence from it; for as it was believed all over the 'army that I had married a great fortune, I had 'received offers of money, if I wanted it, from 'more than one. Indeed I might have eaſily carried 'my wife to Montpelier at any time; but ſhe was 'extremely averſe to the voyage, being deſirous of 'our returning to England, as I had leave to do; 'and ſhe grew daily ſo much better, that had it 'not been for the receipt of that curſed—which I 'have juſt read to you, I am perſuaded ſhe might 'have been able to return to England in the next 'ſhip.

'Among others there was a colonel in the garriſon, 'who had not only offered, but importuned me to 'receive money of him: I now therefore repaired to

'him; and as a reaſon of altering my reſolution, I 'produced the letter, and at the ſame time ac- 'quainted him with the true ſtate of my affairs. 'The colonel read the letter, ſhook his head, and 'after ſome ſilence, ſaid, he was ſorry I had refuſed 'to accept his offer before; but that he had now 'ſo ordered matters, and diſpoſed of his money, 'that he had not a ſhilling left to ſpare from his 'own occaſions.

'Anſwers of the ſame kind I had from ſeveral 'others; but not one penny could I borrow of any; 'for I have been ſince firmly perſuaded that the 'honeſt colonel was not content with denying me 'himſelf; but took effectual means, by ſpreading the 'ſecret I had ſo fooliſhly truſted him with, to pre- 'vent me from ſucceeding elſewhere: for ſuch is the 'nature of men, that whoever denies himſelf to do 'you a favour, is unwilling that it ſhould be done to 'you by any other.

'This was the firſt time I had ever felt that diſtreſs 'which ariſes from the want of money; a diſtreſs 'very dreadful indeed in a married ſtate; for what 'can be more miſerable than to ſee any thing ne- 'ceſſary to the preſervation of a beloved creature, 'and not be able to ſupply it?

'Perhaps you may wonder, madam, that I have 'not mentioned Captain James on this occaſion; 'but he was at that time laid up at Algiers (whi- 'ther he had been ſent by the governor) in a fever. 'However, he returned time enough to ſupply me, 'which he did with the utmoſt readineſs, on the 'very firſt mention of my diſtreſs; and the good 'colonel, notwithſtanding his having diſpoſed of 'his money, diſcounted the captain's draught. You 'ſee, madam, an inſtance in the generous behaviour 'of my friend James, how falſe are all univerſal ſatires 'againſt human kind. He is indeed one of the wor- 'thieſt men the world ever produced.

'But, perhaps, you will be more pleaſed ſtill with 'the extravagant generoſity of my ſerjeant. The day 'before the return of Mr. James, the poor fellow 'came to me, with tears in his eyes, and begged I

'would

'would not be offended at what he was going to mention. He then pulled a purſe from his pocket, 'which contained, he ſaid, the ſum of twelve pounds, 'and which he begged me to accept, crying he was 'ſorry it was not in his power to lend me whatever 'I wanted. I was ſo ſtruck with this inſtance of 'generoſity and friendſhip in ſuch a perſon, that I 'gave him an opportunity of preſſing me a ſecond 'time, before I made him an anſwer. Indeed I was 'greatly ſurpriſed how he came to be worth that little 'ſum, and no leſs at his being acquainted with my 'own wants. In both which points he preſently ſatisfied me. As to the firſt, it ſeems he had plundered a Spaniſh officer of fifteen piſtoles; and as to 'the ſecond, he confeſſed he had it from my wife's 'maid, who had overheard ſome diſcourſe between 'her miſtreſs and me. Indeed people, I believe, always deceive themſelves who imagine they can conceal diſtreſſed circumſtances from their ſervants: for 'theſe are always extremely quick-ſighted on ſuch 'occaſions.

"Good Heaven!" cries Miſs Matthews, "how "aſtoniſhing is ſuch behaviour in ſo low a fellow!"

'I thought ſo myſelf,' anſwered Booth; 'and 'yet I know not, on a more ſtrict examination into 'the matter, why we ſhould be more ſurpriſed to ſee 'greatneſs of mind diſcover itſelf in one degree, or 'rank of life, than in another. Love, benevolence, 'or what you will pleaſe to call it, may be the 'reigning paſſion in a beggar as well as in a prince; 'and wherever it is, its energies will be the ſame.

'To confeſs the truth, I am afraid we often compliment what we call upper life, with too much in'juſtice, at the expence of the lower. As it is no 'rare thing to ſee inſtances which degrade human nature, in perſons of the higheſt birth and education; 'ſo I apprehend, that examples of whatever is really 'great and good, have been ſometimes found amongſt 'thoſe who have wanted all ſuch advantages. In 'reality, palaces, I make no doubt, do ſometimes 'contain nothing but drearineſs and darkneſs, and

'the ſun of righteouſneſs hath ſhone forth with all 'its glory in a cottage.'

CHAP. VIII.

The ſtory of Booth *continued.*

MR. Booth thus went on:

'We now took leave of the garriſon, and 'having landed at Marſeilles, arrived at Montpelier, 'without any thing happening to us worth remem- 'brance, except the extreme ſea ſickneſs of poor 'Amelia; but I was afterwards well repaid for the 'terrors which it occaſioned me, by the good conſe- 'quences which attended it: for I believe it contri- 'buted even more than the air of Montpelier, to the 'perfect reeſtabliſhment of her health.'

"I aſk your pardon for interrupting you," cries Miſs Matthews, "but you never ſatisfied me whe- "ther you took the ſerjeant's money.——You have "made me half in love with that charming fel- "low."

'How can you imagine, madam,' anſwered Booth, 'I ſhould have taken from a poor fellow what was of 'ſo little conſequence to me, and at the ſame time 'of ſo much to him?—Perhaps now you will derive 'this from the paſſion of pride.'

"Indeed," ſays ſhe, "I neither derive it from the "paſſion of pride, nor from the paſſion of folly; but "methinks you ſhould have accepted the offer, and I "am convinced you hurt him very much when you "refuſed it. But pray proceed in your ſtory." Then Booth went on as follows:

'As Amelia recovered her health and ſpirits daily, 'we began to paſs our time very pleaſantly at Mont- 'pelier: for the greateſt enemy to the French will ac- 'knowledge, that they are the beſt people in the 'world to live amongſt for a little while. In ſome 'countries it is almoſt as eaſy to get a good eſtate 'as a good acquaintance. In England, particular- 'ly, acquaintance is of almoſt as ſlow growth as an 'oak; ſo that the age of man ſcarce ſuffices to 'bring it to any perfection, and families ſeldom con-

'tract

'tract any great intimacy till the third, or at leaſt the 'ſecond generation. So ſhy indeed are we Engliſh 'of letting a ſtranger into our houſes, that one would 'imagine we regarded all ſuch as thieves. Now the 'French are the very reverſe. Being a ſtranger 'among them entitles you to the better place, and to 'the greater degree of civility; and if you wear but 'the appearance of a gentleman, they never ſuſpect 'you are not one. Their friendſhip indeed ſeldom 'extends ſo far as their purſe; nor is ſuch friendſhip 'uſual in other countries. To ſay the truth, polite-'neſs carries friendſhip far enough in the ordinary 'occaſions of life, and thoſe who want this accom-'pliſhment rarely make amends for it by their ſince-'rity: for bluntneſs, or rather rudeneſs, as it com-'monly deſerves to be called, is not always ſo much 'a mark of honeſty as it is taken to be.

'The day after our arrival we became acquainted 'with Monſ. Bagillard. He was a Frenchman of 'great wit and vivacity, with a greater ſhare of learn-'ing than gentlemen are uſually poſſeſſed of. As he 'lodged in the ſame houſe with us, we were imme-'diately acquainted, and I liked his converſation ſo 'well, that I never thought I had too much of his 'company. Indeed I ſpent ſo much of my time with 'him, that Amelia (I know not whether I ought to 'mention it) grew uneaſy at our familiarity, and 'complained of my being too little with her, from 'my violent fondneſs for my new acquaintance; for 'our converſation turning chiefly upon books, and 'principally Latin ones (for we read ſeveral of the 'claſſics together) ſhe could have but little entertain-'ment by being with us. When my wife had once 'taken it into her head that ſhe was deprived of my 'company by M. Bagillard, it was impoſſible to 'change her opinion; and though I now ſpent more 'of my time with her than I had ever done before, 'ſhe ſtill grew more and more diſſatisfied, till at laſt, 'ſhe very earneſtly deſired me to quit my lodgings, 'and inſiſted upon it with more vehemence than I 'had ever known her expreſs before. To ſay the 'truth, if that excellent woman could ever be thought

'unreaſonable, I thought ſhe was ſo on this occa-
'ſion.

'But in what light ſoever her deſires appeared
'to me, as they manifeſtly aroſe from an affection
'of which I had daily the moſt endearing proofs, I
'reſolved to comply with her, and accordingly re-
'moved to a diſtant part of the town; for it is my
'opinion that we can have but little love for the per-
'ſon whom we will never indulge in an unreaſonable
'demand. Indeed, I was under a difficulty with
'regard to Monſ. Bagillard; for as I could not poſ-
'ſibly communicate to him the true reaſon for quit-
'ting my lodgings; ſo I found it as difficult to de-
'ceive him by a counterfeit one; beſides, I was ap-
'prehenſive I ſhould have little leſs of his company
'than before. I could, indeed, have avoided this
'dilemma by leaving Montpelier; for Amelia had
'perfectly recovered her health; but I had faithfully
'promiſed Captain James to wait his return from
'Italy, whither he was gone ſome time before from
'Gibraltar; nor was it proper for Amelia to take
'any long journey, ſhe being now near ſix months
'gone with child.

'This difficulty, however, proved to be leſs than
'I had imagined it; for my French friend, whether
'he ſuſpected any thing from my wife's behaviour,
'though ſhe never, as I obſerved, ſhewed him the
'leaſt incivility, became ſuddenly as cold on his ſide.
'After our leaving the lodgings, he never made
'above two or three formal viſits; indeed his time was
'ſoon after entirely taken up by an intrigue with a
'certain counteſs, which blazed all over Montpelier.

'We had not been long in our new apartments be-
'fore an Engliſh officer arrived at Montpelier, and
'came to lodge in the ſame houſe with us. This
'gentleman whoſe name was Bath, was of the rank
'of a major, and had ſo much ſingularity in his
'character, that perhaps you never heard of any
'like him. He was far from having any of thoſe
'bookiſh qualifications, which had before cauſed my
'Amelia's diſquiet. It is true, his diſcourſe gene-
'rally turned on matters of no feminine kind; war

'and

'and martial exploits being the ordinary topics of his 'converſation: however, as he had a ſiſter with 'whom Amelia was greatly pleaſed, an intimacy pre- 'ſently grew between us, and we four lived in one 'family.

'The major was a great dealer in the marvellous, 'and was conſtantly the little hero of his own tale. 'This made him very entertaining to Amelia, who, 'of all perſons in the world, had the trueſt taſte and 'enjoyment of the ridiculous; for whilſt no one 'ſooner diſcovers it in the character of another, no 'one ſo well conceals her knowledge of it from the 'ridiculous perſon. I cannot help mentioning a ſen- 'timent of her's on this head, as I think it doth her 'great honour.' "If I had the ſame neglect," ſaid ſhe, "for ridiculous people with the generality of "the world, I ſhould rather think them the objects of "tears than laughter; but, in reality, I have known "ſeveral, who, in ſome parts of their characters have "been extremely ridiculous, in others have been "altogether as amiable. For inſtance," ſaid ſhe, "here is the major who tells us of many things "which he has never ſeen, and of others which he "hath never done, and both in the moſt extravagant "exceſs; and yet how amiable is his behaviour to "his poor ſiſter, whom he hath not only brought "over hither for her health, at his own expence, "but is come to bear her company."—'I believe, 'madam, I repeat her very words; for I am very apt 'to remember what ſhe ſays.

'You will eaſily believe, from a circumſtance I 'have juſt mentioned in the major's favour, eſpecially 'when I have told you that his ſiſter was one of the 'beſt of girls, that it was entirely neceſſary to hide 'from her all kind of laughter at any part of her 'brother's behaviour. To ſay the truth, this was 'eaſy enough to do; for the poor girl was ſo blinded 'with love and gratitude, and ſo highly honoured 'and reverenced her brother, that ſhe had not the 'leaſt ſuſpicion that there was a perſon in the world 'capable of laughing at him.

'Indeed, I am certain she never made the least discovery of our ridicule; for I am well convinced she would have resented it: for besides the love she bore her brother, she had a little family pride, which would sometimes appear. To say the truth, if she had any fault, it was that of vanity; but she was a very good girl upon the whole; and none of us are entirely free from faults.'

"You are a good natured fellow, Will," answered Miss Matthews, "but vanity is a fault of the first "magnitude in a woman, and often the occasion of "many others.'

To this Booth made no answer, but continued his story.

'In this company we passed two or three months "very agreeably till the major and I both betook 'ourselves to our several nurseries; my wife being 'brought to bed of a girl, and Miss Bath confined 'to her chamber by a surfeit, which had like to have 'occasioned her death.'

Here Miss Matthews burst into a loud laugh, of which when Booth asked the reason, she said she "could not forbear at the thoughts of two such nurses: "And did you really," says she, "make your wife's "caudle yourself?"

'Indeed, madam,' said he, 'I did; and do you 'think that so extraordinary.'

"Indeed I do," answered she, "I thought the best "husbands had looked on their wives lying-in as a "time of festival and jolity. What did you not even "get drunk in the time of your wife's delivery? tell "me honestly how you employed yourself at this time."

'Why then honestly,' replied he, 'and in defiance 'of your laughter, I lay behind her bolster, and supported her in my arms; and upon my soul, I believe 'I felt more pain in my mind than she underwent in 'her body. And now answer me as honestly: do 'you really think it a proper time of mirth, when 'the creature one loves to distraction is undergoing 'the most racking torments, as well as in the most imminent danger? and—but I need not express any 'more tender circumstances.

'I am

"I am to anſwer honeſtly," cried ſhe.—'Yes.' And 'ſincerely,' cries Booth.—"Why then honeſtly and "ſincerely," ſays ſhe, "may I never ſee Heaven, if "I don't think you an angel of a man."

'Nay, madam,' anſwered Booth—'but, indeed, 'you do me too much honour, there are many ſuch 'huſbands—Nay, have we not an example of the 'like tenderneſs in the major? though as to him, I 'believe, I ſhall make you laugh. While my wife 'lay in, Miſs Bath being extremely ill, I went one 'day to the door of her apartment, to enquire after 'her health, as well as for the major, whom I had not 'ſeen during a whole week. I knocked ſoftly at the 'door, and being bid to open it, I found the major 'in his ſiſter's antichamber warming her poſſet. His 'dreſs was certainly whimſical enough, having on a 'woman's bed-gown, and a very dirty flannel night-'cap, which being added to a very odd perſon (for 'he is a very awkward thin man, near ſeven feet high) 'might have formed, in the opinion of moſt men, a 'very proper object of laughter. The major ſtarted 'from his ſeat at my entering into the room, and with 'much emotion, and a great oath, cried out, "is it "you, ſir?"—'I then enquired after his and his ſiſter's 'health. He anſwered, that his ſiſter was better, 'and he was very well,' "though I did not expect, "ſir," 'cried he, with not a little confuſion,'—"to "be ſeen by you in this ſituation." 'I told him, 'I thought it impoſſible he could appear in a ſi-'tuation more becoming his character.'—"You do "not?" 'anſwered he,' "By G—— I am very "much obliged to you for that opinion; but I be-"lieve, ſir, however my weakneſs may prevail on me "to deſcend from it, no man can be more conſcious "of his own dignity than myſelf." 'His ſiſter then 'called to him from the inner room; upon which he 'rang the bell for her ſervant, and then, after a ſtride or 'two acroſs the room, he ſaid, with an elated aſpect. "I would not have you think, Mr. Booth, becauſe "you have caught me in this diſhabille, by coming "upon me a little too abruptly, I cannot help ſay ng "a little too abruptly, that I am my ſiſter's nurſe.

" I know better what is due to the dignity of a man, " and I have ſhewn it in a line of battle.—I think " I have made a figure there, Mr. Booth, and be- " coming my character; by G—— I ought not to be " deſpiſed too much, if my nature is not totally with- " out its weakneſſes." ' He uttered this, and ſome ' more of the ſame kind, with great majeſty, or, as ' he called it, dignity. Indeed, he uſed ſome hard ' words that I did not underſtand; for all his words ' are not to be found in a dictionary. Upon the ' whole, I could not eaſily refrain from laughter; ' however, I conquered myſelf, and ſoon after retired ' from him, aſtoniſhed that it was poſſible for a man ' to poſſeſs true goodneſs, and be, at the ſame time ' aſhamed of it.'

' But if I was ſurpriſed at what had paſt at this ' viſit, how much more was I ſurpriſed the next ' morning, when he came very early to my chamber, ' and told me he had not been able to ſleep one wink ' at what had paſt between us!' " There were ſome " words of yours," ' ſays he,' " which muſt be fur- " ther explained before we part. You told me, ſir, " when you found me in that ſituation, which I can- " not bear to recollect, that you thought I could not " appear in one more becoming my character; theſe " were the words, I ſhall never forget them. Do " you imagine that there is any of the dignity of a " man wanting in my character? do you think that " I have, during my ſiſter's illneſs, behaved with a " weakneſs that ſavours too much of effeminacy? I " know how much it is beneath a man to whine and " whimper about a trifling girl as well as you, or " any man; and if my ſiſter had died, I ſhould have " behaved like a man on the occaſion. I ſhould not " have you think I confined myſelf from company " merely upon her account. I was very much diſ- " ordered myſelf. And when you ſurpriſed me in " that ſituation, I repeat again in that ſituation, her " nurſe had not left the room three minutes, and I " was blowing the fire for fear it would have gone " out."—' In this manner he ran on almoſt a quar- ' ter of an hour, before he would ſuffer me to ſpeak.

' At

'At laſt, looking ſtedfaſtly in his face, I aſked him 'if I muſt conclude that he was in earneſt.—"In "earneſt," ſays he, repeating my words, "do you "then take my character for a jeſt!"—'Lookee, ſir, 'ſaid I, very gravely, I think we know one another 'very well, and I have no reaſon to ſuſpect you 'ſhould impute it to fear, when I tell you, I was ſo 'far from intending to affront you, that I meant you 'one of the higheſt compliments. Tenderneſs for 'women is ſo far from leſſening, that it proves a 'true manly character. The manly Brutus ſhewed 'the utmoſt tenderneſs to his Porcia; and the great 'King of Sweden, the braveſt, and even fierceſt of 'men, ſhut himſelf up three whole days in the midſt 'of a campaign, and would ſee no company on the 'death of a favourite ſiſter. At theſe words, I ſaw 'his features ſoften; and he cried out, "d—n me, "I admire the King of Sweden of all the men in the "world; and he is a raſcal that is aſhamed of doing "any thing which the King of Sweden did.—And "yet if any King of Sweden in France was to tell "me that his ſiſter had more merit than mine; by "G——d I'd knock his brains about his ears. Poor "little Betſey! ſhe is the honeſteſt, worthieſt girl that "ever was born. Heaven be praiſed, ſhe is recover-"ed; for, if I had loſt her, I never ſhould have en-"joyed another happy moment."—'In this manner 'he ran on ſome time, till the tears began to over-'flow—which, when he perceived, he ſtopped; per-'haps he was unable to go on; for he ſeemed almoſt 'choaked;—after a ſhort ſilence, however, having 'wiped his eyes with his handkerchief, he fetched a 'deep ſigh, and cried, "I am aſhamed you ſhould "ſee this, Mr. Booth; but d—n me, nature will "get the better of dignity."—'I now comforted him 'with the example of Xerxes, as I had before done 'with that of the King of Sweden; and ſoon after 'we ſat down to breakfaſt together with much cor-'dial friendſhip: for I aſſure you, with all his od-'dity, there is not a better natured man in the world 'than the major.

"Good natured, indeed!" cries Miſs Matthews, with great ſcorn.—"A fool! how can you mention "ſuch a fellow with commedation?"

Booth ſpoke as much as he could in defence of his friend; indeed he had repreſented him in as favourable a light as poſſible, and had particularly left out thoſe hard words, with which, as he hath obſerved a little before, the major interlarded his diſcourſe. Booth then proceeded as in the next chapter.

CHAP. IX.

Containing very extraordinary matters.

'MISS Bath,' continued Booth, 'now recovered ſo faſt, that ſhe was abroad as ſoon as my 'wife. Our little party quarrée began to grow a-'greeable again; and we mixed with the company 'of the place more than we had done before. Monſ. 'Bagillard now again renewed his intimacy; for the 'counteſs his miſtreſs was gone to Paris. At which 'my wife at firſt ſhowed no diſſatisfaction; and I 'imagined that as ſhe had a friend and companion 'of her own ſex (for Miſs Bath and ſhe had con-'tracted the higheſt fondneſs for each other) that ſhe 'would the leſs miſs my company. However, I was 'diſappointed in this expectation; for ſhe ſoon be-'gan to expreſs her former uneaſineſs, and her im-'patience for the arrival of Captain James, that we 'might entirely quit Montpelier.

'I could not avoid conceiving ſome little diſplea-'ſure at this humour of my wife, which I was forced 'to think a little unreaſonable.'—"A little, do you "call it," ſays Miſs Matthews, "Good Heavens! "what a huſband are you!"—'How little worthy,' anſwered he, 'as you will ſay hereafter, of ſuch a 'wife as my Amelia. One day as we were ſitting 'together, I heard a violent ſcream, upon which 'my wife ſtarting up, cried out, "Sure that's Miſs "Bath's voice,"—'and immediately ran towards the 'chamber whence it proceeded. I followed her; 'and when we arrived, we there beheld the moſt

'ſhock-

'ſhocking ſight imaginable; Miſs Bath lying dead 'on the floor, and the major all bloody kneeling by 'her, and roaring out for aſſiſtance. Amelia, though 'ſhe was herſelf in little better condition than her 'friend, ran haſtily to her, bared her neck, and at-'tempted to looſen her ſtays, while I ran up and 'down, ſcarce knowing what I did, calling for wa-'ter and cordials, and diſpatching ſeveral ſervants 'one after another for doctors and ſurgeons.

'Water, cordials, and all neceſſary implements 'being brought, Miſs Bath was, at length, recover-'ed, and placed in her chair, when the major ſeated 'himſelf by her. And now the young lady being 'reſtored to life, the major, who, till then, had en-'gaged as little of his own, as of any other perſon's 'attention, became the object of all our conſidera-'tions, eſpecially his poor ſiſter's, who had no ſooner 'recovered ſufficient ſtrength, than ſhe began to la-'ment her brother, crying out, that he was killed; 'and bitterly bewailing her fate, in having revived 'from her ſwoon to behold ſo dreadful a ſpectacle. 'While Amelia applied herſelf to ſooth the agonies 'of her friend, I began to enquire into the condition 'of the major. In which I was aſſiſted by a ſergeon, 'who now arrived. The major declared with great 'chearfulneſs, that he did not apprehend his wound 'to be in the leaſt dangerous, and therefore begged 'his ſiſter to be comforted, ſaying, he was convinced 'the ſurgeon would ſoon give her the ſame aſſurance; 'but that good man was not ſo liberal of aſſurances 'as the major had expected; for as ſoon as he had 'probed the wound, he afforded no more than hopes, 'declaring that it was a very ugly wound; but add-'ed, by way of conſolation, that he had cured many 'much worſe.

'When the major was dreſt, his ſiſter ſeemed to 'poſſeſs his whole thoughts, and all his care was to 'relieve her grief. He ſolemnly proteſted, that it 'was no more than a fleſh wound, and not very deep, 'nor could, as he apprehended, be in the leaſt dan-'gerous; and as for the cold expreſſions of the ſur-'geon, he very well accounted for them from a mo-

'tive

'tive too obvious to be mentioned. From theſe de-
'clarations of her brother, and the interpoſition of
'her friends; and above all, I believe, from that vaſt
'vent which ſhe had given to her fright, Miſs Bath
'ſeemed a little pacified; Amelia therefore at laſt
'prevailed; and as terror abated, curioſity became
'the ſuperior paſſion. I therefore now began to en-
'quire what had occaſioned that accident, whence
'all the uproar aroſe.

'The major took me by the hand, and looking
'very kindly at me,' ſaid, "My dear Mr. Booth,
"I muſt begin by aſking your pardon; for I have
"done you an injury, for which nothing but the
"height of friendſhip in me can be an excuſe; and
"therefore nothing but the height of friendſhip in
"you can forgive." 'This preamble, madam, you
'will eaſily believe, greatly alarmed all the compa-
'ny, but eſpecially me.—I anſwered, dear major, I
'forgive you, let it be what it will; but what is it
'poſſible you can have done to injure me?' "That,"
replied he, "which I am convinced a man of your
"honour and dignity of nature, by G—— muſt con-
"clude to be one of the higheſt injuries. I have
"taken out of your own hands the doing yourſelf
"juſtice. I am afraid I have killed the man who
"hath injured your honour. I mean that villain, Ba-
"gillard—but I cannot proceed; for you, madam,"
'ſaid he to my wife,' "are concerned; and I know
"what is due to the dignity of your ſex."—'Ame-
'lia, I obſerved, turned pale at theſe words, but
'eagerly begged him to proceed.'—"Nay madam,"
'anſwered he,' "if I am commanded by a lady, it
"is a part of my dignity to obey." 'He then pro-
'ceeded to tell us, that Bagillard had rallied him
'upon a ſuppoſition that he was purſuing my wife,
'with a view of gallantry; telling him that he could
'never ſucceed; giving hints that if it had been
'poſſible, he ſhould have ſucceeded himſelf; and
'ending with calling my poor Amelia an accom-
'pliſhed prude; upon which the major gave Bagil-
'lard a box on the ear, and both immediately drew
'their ſwords.

'The

'The major had ſcarce ended his ſpeech, when a 'ſervant came into the room, and told me there was 'a friar below who deſired to ſpeak with me in great 'haſte. I ſhook the major by the hand, and told 'him I not only forgave him, but was extremely 'obliged to his friendſhip; and then going to the 'friar, I found that he was Bagillard's confeſſor, 'from whom he came to me, with an earneſt deſire 'of ſeeing me, that he might aſk my pardon, and re-'ceive my forgiveneſs before he died, for the injury 'he had intended me. My wife at firſt oppoſed my 'going, from ſome ſudden fears on my account; but 'when ſhe was convinced they were groundleſs, ſhe 'conſented.

'I found Bagillard in his bed; for the major's 'ſword had paſſed up to the very hilt through his 'body. After having very earneſtly aſked my par-'don, he made me many compliments on the poſ-'ſeſſion of a woman, who joined to the moſt exqui-'ſite beauty, was miſtreſs of the moſt impregnable 'virtue; as a proof of which, he acknowledged the 'vehemence as well as ill ſucceſs of his attempts; 'and to make Amelia's virtue appear the brighter, 'his vanity was ſo predominant, he could not for-'bear running over the names of ſeveral women of 'faſhion who had yielded to his paſſion, which, he 'ſaid, had never raged ſo violently for any other as for 'my poor Amelia; and that this violence, which he 'had found wholly unconquerable, he hoped would 'procure his pardon at my hands. It is unneceſſary 'to mention what I ſaid on the occaſion. I aſſured 'him of my entire forgiveneſs; and ſo we parted. 'To ſay the truth, I afterwards thought myſelf almoſt 'obliged to him for a meeting with Amelia, the moſt 'luxuriouſly delicate that can be imagined.

'I now ran to my wife, whom I embraced with 'raptures of love and tenderneſs. When the firſt 'torrent of theſe was a little abated, "Confeſs to "me, my dear," 'ſaid ſhe,' "could your goodneſs "prevent you from thinking me a little unreaſon-"able in expreſſing ſo much uneaſineſs at the loſs of "your company, while I ought to have rejoiced in

"the

" the thoughts of your being ſo well entertained?
" I know you muſt; and then conſider what I muſt
" have felt, while I knew I was daily leſſening my-
" ſelf in your eſteem, and forced into a conduct,
" which I was ſenſible muſt appear to you, who was
" ignorant of my motive, to be mean, vulgar, and
" ſelfiſh. And yet what other courſe had I to take,
" with a man whom no denial, no ſcorn could abaſh?
" —But if this was a cruel taſk, how much more
" wretched ſtill was the conſtraint I was obliged to
" wear in his preſence before you, to ſhew outward
" civility to the man whom my ſoul deteſted, for
" fear of any fatal conſequence from your ſuſpicion;
" and this too, while I was afraid he would conſtrue
" it to be an encouragement.—Do you not pity your
" poor Amelia when you reflect on her ſituation?"—
'Pity!' cried I, my love, is pity an adequate expreſ-
'ſion for eſteem, for adoration?—But how, my love,
'could he carry this on ſo ſecretly—by letters?' " O
" no, he offered me many; but I never would receive
" but one, and that I returned him. Good G——
" I would not have ſuch a letter in my poſſeſſion for
" the univerſe; I thought my eyes contaminated
" with reading it."—' O brave,' cried Miſs Mat-
thews: ' Heroic, I proteſt.

' Had I a wiſh that did not bear
' The ſtamp and image of my dear,
' I'd pierce my heart through every vein,
' And die to let it out again.'

' And can you really,' cried he, ' laugh at ſo much
' tenderneſs?'—" I laugh at tenderneſs! O Mr.
" Booth," anſwered ſhe, " Thou knoweſt but little
" of Caliſta."—' I thought formerly,' cried he, ' I
' knew a great deal, and thought you, of all women
' in the world, to have the greateſt'——" Of all
" women!—Take care, Mr. Booth," ſaid ſhe.—
" By Heaven, if you thought ſo, you thought truly
" —But what is the object of my tenderneſs, ſuch an
" object as"——' Well, madam,' ſays he, ' I hope
' you will find one.'——" I thank you for that hope,
" however," ſays ſhe, " cold as it is; but pray go
" on with your ſtory;" which command he immediately obeyed.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Containing a letter of a very curious kind.

'THE major's wound,' continued Booth, was 'really as ſlight as he believed it; ſo that in a 'very few days he was perfectly well; nor was Bagil-'lard, though run through the body, long apprehend-'ed to be in any danger of his life. The major then 'took me aſide, and wiſhing me heartily joy of Bagil-'lard's recovery, told me I ſhould now, by the gift '(as it were) of Heaven, have an opportunity of doing 'myſelf juſtice. I anſwered, I could not think of any 'ſuch thing: for that when I imagined he was on his 'death-bed, I had heartily and ſincerely forgiven 'him.'—"Very right," replied the major, "and "conſiſtent with your honour, when he was on his "death-bed; but that forgiveneſs was only conditio-"nal, and is revoked by his recovery." 'I told him 'I could not poſſibly revoke it; for that my anger 'was really gone.'—"What hath anger,"—cried he, "to do with the matter? the dignity of my nature "hath been always my reaſon for drawing my ſword; "and when that is concerned, I can as readily fight "with the man I love, as with the man I hate."—'I 'will not tire you with the repetition of the whole ar-'gument, in which the major did not prevail; and I 'really believe I ſunk a little in his eſteem upon that 'account, till Captain James, who arrived ſoon after, 'again perfectly re-inſtated me in his favour.

'When the captain was come, there remained no 'cauſe of our longer ſtay at Montpelier; for as to my 'wife, ſhe was in a better ſtate of health than I had 'ever known her, and Miſs Bath had not only reco-'vered her health, but her bloom; and from a pale 'ſkeleton, was become a plump, handſome, young 'woman. James was again my caſhier; for far from 'receiving any remittance, it was now a long time 'ſince I had received any letter from England, though 'both myſelf and my dear Amelia had written ſeveral, 'both to my mother and ſiſter; and now at our de-'parture from Montpelier, I bethought myſelf of

'writing

'writing to my good friend the doctor, acquainting 'him with our journey to Paris, whither I desired he 'would direct his answer.

'At Paris we all arrived, without encountring any 'adventure on the road worth relating; nor did any 'thing of consequence happen here during the first 'fortnight: for as you know neither Captain James 'nor Miss Bath, it is scarce worth telling you, that 'an affection, which afterwards ended in a marriage, 'began now to appear between them, in which it may 'appear odd to you that I made the first discovery 'of the lady's flame, and my wife of the captain's.

'The seventeenth day after our arrival at Paris, I 'received a letter from the doctor, which I have in 'my pocket-book; and, if you please, I will read it 'you: for I would not willingly do any injury to his 'words.'

The lady, you may easily believe, desired to hear the letter, and Booth read it as follows:

"My dear children,

"FOR I will now call you so, as you have nei-"ther of you now any other parent in this "world. Of this melancholy news I should have "sent you earlier notice, if I had thought you ig-"norant of it, or indeed if I had known whither to "have written. If your sister hath received any let-"ters from you, she hath kept them a secret, and "perhaps out of affection to you hath reposited them "in the same place where she keeps her goodness, "and, what I am afraid is much dearer to her, her "money. The reports concerning you have been "various; so is always the case in matters where men "are ignorant: for when no man knows what the "truth is, every man thinks himself at liberty to re-"port what he pleases. Those who wish you well, "son Booth, say simply that you are dead; others, "that you ran away from the siege, and was cashier-"ed. As for my daughter, all agree that she is a "saint above; and there are not wanting those who "hint that her husband sent her thither. From this "beginning you will expect, I suppose, better news

"than

" than I am going to tell you; but pray, my dear " children, why may not I, who have always laughed " at my own afflictions, laugh at yours, without the " cenſure of much malevolence? I wiſh you could " learn this temper from me; for, take my word for " it, nothing truer ever came from the mouth of a " heathen than that ſentence,

" —*Leve fit quod bene fertur onus* *.

" And though I muſt confeſs, I never thought Ari- " ſtotle (whom I do not take for ſo great a blockhead " as ſome who have never read him) doth not very " well reſolve the doubt which he hath raiſed in his " Ethics, viz. How a man, in the midſt of King " Priam's misfortunes, can be called happy? Yet I " have long thought that there is no calamity ſo great " that a chriſtian philoſopher may not reaſonably " laugh at it. If the heathen Cicero, doubting of " immortality (for ſo wiſe a man muſt have doubted " of that which had ſuch ſlender arguments to ſup- " port it) could aſſert it as the office of wiſdom, *Hu-* " *manas res deſpicere atque infra ſe poſitas arbitrari* †.

" Which paſſage, with much more to the ſame pur- " poſe, you will find in the third book of his Tuſcu- " lan Queſtions.

" With how much greater confidence may a good " chriſtian deſpiſe, and even deride all temporary " and ſhort tranſitory evils! If the poor wretch, who " is trudging on to his miſerable cottage, can laugh " at the ſtorms, and tempeſts, the rain and whirlwinds " which ſurround him, while his richeſt hope is only " that of reſt, how much more chearfully muſt a man " paſs through ſuch tranſient evils whoſe ſpirits are " buoyed up with the certain expectation of finding a " noble palace, and the moſt ſumptuous entertain- " ment ready to receive him? I do not much like " the ſimile; but I cannot think of a better. And " yet, inadequate as the ſimile is, we may, I think, " from the actions of mankind, conclude that they " will

* The burden becomes light by being well borne.

† To look down on all human affairs as matters below his conſideration.

" will conſider it as much too ſtrong; for in the caſe " I have put of the entertainment, is there any man " ſo tender or poor-ſpirited as not to deſpiſe and often " to deride the fierceſt of thoſe inclemencies which I " have mentioned, but in our journey to the glorious " manſions of everlaſting bliſs, how ſeverely is every " little rub, every trifling accident lamented; and if " fortune ſhowers down any of her heavier ſtorms " upon us, how wretched do we preſently appear to " ourſelves and to others! The reaſon of this can be " no other than that we are not in earneſt in our faith; " at the beſt we think, with too little attention, on " this our great concern. While the moſt paultry " matters of this world, even thoſe pitiful trifles, " thoſe childiſh gewgaws, riches and honours, are " tranſacted with the utmoſt earneſtneſs, and moſt ſe- " rious application, the grand and weighty affair of " immortality is poſtponed and diſregarded, nor ever " brought into the leaſt competition with our affairs " here. If one of my cloth ſhould begin a diſcourſe " of Heaven in the ſcenes of buſineſs or pleaſure; in " the Court of Requeſts, at Garaway's or at White's, " would he gain a hearing, unleſs, perhaps, of ſome " ſorry jeſter who would deſire to ridicule him? would " he not preſently acquire the name of the mad par- " ſon, and be thought by all men worthy of Bedlam? " or would he not be treated as the Romans treated " their Aretalogi *, and conſidered in the light of a " buffoon. But why ſhould I mention thoſe places " of hurry and worldly purſuit?—What attention do " we engage even in the pulpit? here, if a ſermon " be prolonged a little beyond the uſual hour, doth it " not ſet half the audience aſleep? as I queſtion not " I have by this time both my children.—Well then, " like a good-natured ſurgeon, who prepares his pa- " tient for a painful operation, by endeavouring as " much as he can to deaden his ſenſation, I will now " communicate to you, in your ſlumbering condition, " the news with which I threatened you. Your good " mother, you are to know, is dead at laſt, and hath " left

* *A ſet of* beggarly philoſophers, who diverted great men at their *table with* burleſque diſcourſes on virtue.

" left her whole fortune to her elder daughter.—This " is all the ill news I have to tell you. Confeſs now, if " you are awake, did you not expect it was much " worſe? did not you apprehend that your charming " child was dead? far from it, he is in perfect health, " and the admiration of ev ry body; what is more, " he will be taken care of, with the tenderneſs of a " parent, till your return. What pleaſure muſt this " give you! if indeed any thing can add to the hap- " pineſs of a married couple, who are extremely and " deſervedly fond of each other, and, as you write " me, in perfect health. A ſuperſtitious heathen " would have dreaded the malice of Nemeſis in your " ſituation; but as I am a chriſtian, I ſhall venture to " add another circumſtance to your felicity, by aſſur- " ing you that you have, beſides your wife, a faithful " and zealous friend.— Do not therefore, my dear " children, fall into that fault which the excellent " Thucydides obſerves, is too common in human na- " ture, to bear heavily the being deprived of the " ſmaller good, without conceiving, at the ſame " time, any gratitude for the much greater bleſſings " which we are ſuffered to enjoy. I have only far- " ther to tell you, my ſon, that when you call at Mr. " Morand's, Rue Dauphine, you will find yourſelf " worth a hundred pounds. Good Heaven! how " much richer are you than millions of people who " are in want of nothing! Farewel, and know me " for

" Your ſincere and affectionate friend."

' There, madam,' cries Booth, ' how do you like ' the letter?'

" Oh! extremely,' anſwered ſhe, " the doctor is a " charming man; I always loved dearly to hear him " preach. I remember to have heard of Mrs. Harris's " death above a year before I left the country; but " never knew the particulars of her will before. I am " extremely ſorry for it, upon my honour."

' Oh fy! madam,' cries Booth, ' have you ſo ſoon ' forgot the chief purport of the doctor's letter?'

" Ay, ay," cried ſhe, " theſe are very pretty things

" to

" to read, I acknowledge; but the loſs of fortune is " a ſerious matter; and I am ſure a man of Mr. " Booth's underſtanding muſt think ſo." ' One conſi-
' deration, I muſt own, madam,' anſwered he, ' a good
' deal baffled all the doctor's arguments. This was
' the concern for my little growing family, who muſt
' one day feel the loſs; nor was I ſo eaſy upon Ame-
' lia's account as upon my own, though ſhe herſelf
' put on the utmoſt chearfulneſs, and ſtretched her in-
' vention to the utmoſt to comfort me.—But ſure,
' madam, there is ſomething in the doctor's letter to
' admire beyond the philoſophy of it; what think
' you of that eaſy, generous, friendly manner, in
' which he ſent me the hundred pounds?'

" Very noble and great indeed," replied ſhe; " but " pray go on with your ſtory; for I long to hear the " whole."

CHAP. XI.

In which Mr. Booth *relates his return to* England.

' NOTHING remarkable, as I remember, hap-
' pened during our ſtay at Paris, which we left
' ſoon after, and came to London. Here we reſted
' only two days, and then, taking leave of our fel-
' low travellers, we ſet out for Wiltſhire, my wife be-
' ing ſo impatient to ſee the child, which ſhe had left
' behind her, that the child ſhe carried with her was
' almoſt killed with the fatigue of the journey.

' We arrived at our inn late in the evening. Amelia,
' though ſhe had no great reaſon to be pleaſed with
' any part of her ſiſter's behaviour, reſolved to behave
' to her, as if nothing wrong had ever happened.
' She therefore ſent a kind note to her the moment of
' our arrival, giving her her option whether ſhe would
' come to us at the inn, or whether we ſhould that
' evening wait on her. The ſervant, after waiting an
' hour, brought us an anſwer, excuſing her from
' coming to us ſo late, as ſhe was diſordered with a
' cold, and deſiring my wife by no means to think of
' venturing out after the fatigue of her journey, ſay-
' ing, ſhe would, on that account, defer the great

'pleaſure of ſeeing her till the morning, without taking any more notice of your humble ſervant, than 'if no ſuch perſon had been in the world, though I 'had very civilly ſent my compliments to her. I 'ſhould not mention this trifle, if it was not to ſhow 'you the nature of the woman, and that it will be a 'kind of key to her future conduct.

'When the ſervant returned, the good doctor, 'who had been with us almoſt all the time of his abſence, hurried us away to his houſe, where we preſently found a ſupper and a bed prepared for us. My 'wife was eagerly deſirous to ſee her child that night; 'but the doctor would not ſuffer it: and as he was at 'nurſe at a diſtant part of the town, and the doctor 'aſſured her he had ſeen him in perfect health that 'evening, ſhe ſuffered herſelf at laſt to be diſſuaded.

'We ſpent that evening in the moſt agreeable manner: for the doctor's wit and humour, joined to the 'higheſt chearfulneſs and good-nature, made him the 'moſt agreeable companion in the world; and he 'was now in the higheſt ſpirits, which he was pleaſed 'to place to our account. We ſat together to a very 'late hour: for ſo excellent is my wife's conſtitution, 'that ſhe declared ſhe was ſcarce ſenſible of any fatigue from her late journies.

'Amelia ſlept not a wink all night, and in the 'morning early the doctor accompanied us to the little 'infant. The tranſports we felt on this occaſion 'were really enchanting, nor can any but a fond parent conceive, I am certain, the leaſt idea of them. 'Our imaginations ſuggeſted a hundred agreeable 'circumſtances, none of which had, perhaps, any 'foundation. We made words and meaning out of 'every ſound, and in every feature I found out ſome 'reſemblance to my Amelia, as ſhe did to me.

'But I aſk your pardon for dwelling on ſuch incidents; and will proceed to ſcenes which, to moſt 'perſons, will be more entertaining.

'We went hence to pay a viſit to Miſs Harris, 'whoſe reception of us was, I think, truly ridiculous; 'and as you know the lady, I will endeavour to deſcribe it particularly. At our firſt arrival we were

'uſhered

'ushered into a parlour, where we were suffered to 'wait almost an hour. At length the lady of the 'house appeared in deep mourning, with a face, if 'possible, more dismal than her dress, in which, 'however, there was every appearance of art. Her 'features were indeed skrewed up to the very heighth 'of grief. With this face, and in the most solemn 'gait, she approached Amelia, and coldly saluted her. 'After which, she made me a very distant formal 'courtesy, and we all sat down. A short silence now 'ensued, which Miss Harris at length broke, with a 'deep sigh, and said, "Sister, here is a great altera-"tion in this place since you saw it last; Heaven hath "been pleased to take my poor mother to itself."—(Here she wiped her eyes, and then continued) "I "hope I know my duty, and have learned a proper "resignation to the divine will; but something is to "be allowed to grief for the best of mothers; for so "she was to us both: and if at last she made any "distinction, she must have had her reason for so "doing. I am sure I can truely say I never wished, "much less desired it."—'The tears now stood in poor 'Amelia's eyes; indeed she had paid too many already 'for the memory of so unnatural a parent. She an-'swered with the sweetness of an angel, that she was 'far from blaming her sister's emotions on so tender 'an occasion; that she heartily joined with her in her 'grief: for that nothing which her mother had done 'in the latter part of her life, could efface the re-'membrance of that tenderness which she had for-'merly shewn her. Her sister caught hold of the word 'efface, and rung the changes upon it.—"Efface!" 'cried she, "O Miss Emely (for you must not expect "me to repeat names that will be for ever odious) I wish "indeed every thing could be effaced.—Effaced! O "that that was possible; we might then have still en-"joyed my poor mother: for I am convinced she ne-"ver recovered her grief on a certain occasion."—— 'Thus she ran on, and after many bitter strokes upon 'her sister, at last directly charged her mother's death 'on my marriage with Amelia. I could be silent 'then no longer. I reminded her of the perfect re-

'con-

'conciliation between us before my departure, and 'the great fondneſs which ſhe expreſſed for me; nor 'could I help ſaying in very plain terms, that if ſhe 'had ever changed her opinion of me, as I was not 'conſcious of having deſerved ſuch a change by my 'own behaviour, I was well convinced to whoſe good 'offices I owed it. Guilt hath very quick ears to an 'accuſation. Miſs Harris immediately anſwered to 'the charge. She ſaid ſuch ſuſpicions were no more 'than ſhe expected; that they were of a piece with 'every other part of my conduct, and gave her one 'conſolation, that they ſerved to account for her 'ſiſter Emily's unkindneſs, as well to herſelf as to her 'poor deceaſed mother, and in ſome meaſure leſſened 'the guilt of it with regard to her, ſince it was not 'eaſy to know how far a woman is in the power of 'her huſband. My dear Amelia reddened at this re-'flexion on me; and begged her ſiſter to name any 'ſingle inſtance of unkindneſs or diſreſpect, in which 'ſhe had ever offended. To this the other anſwered, '(I am ſure I repeat her words, though I cannot 'mimic either the voice or air with which they were 'ſpoken)—"Pray, Miſs Emily, which is to be the "judge? yourſelf or that gentleman? I remember the "time when I could have truſted to your judgment in "any affair; but you are now no longer miſtreſs of "yourſelf, and are not anſwerable for your actions. "Indeed it is my conſtant prayer that your actions may "not be imputed to you.—It was the conſtant prayer "of that bleſſed woman, my dear mother, who is now "a ſaint above; a ſaint whoſe name I can never men-"tion without a tear, though I find you can hear it "without one.—I cannot help obſerving ſome concern "on ſo melancholy an occaſion; it ſeems due to de-"cency; but perhaps (for I always wiſh to excuſe "you) you are forbid to cry." The idea of being 'bid or forbid to cry, ſtruck ſo ſtrongly on my fancy, 'that indignation only could have prevented me from 'laughing. But my narrative, I am afraid, begins 'to grow tedious.—In ſhort, after hearing, for near 'an hour every malicious inſinuation, which a fertile 'genius could invent, we took our leave and ſepa-

'rated as perſons who would never willingly meet 'again.

'The next morning after this interview, Amelia 'received a long letter from Miſs Harris; in which, 'after many bitter invectives againſt me, ſhe excuſed 'her mother, alledging that ſhe had been driven to do 'as ſhe did, in order to prevent Amelia's ruin, if 'her fortune had fallen into my hands. She likewiſe 'very remotely hinted that ſhe would be only a truſtee 'for her ſiſter's children, and told her, that on one 'condition only, ſhe would conſent to live with her 'as a ſiſter. This was, if ſhe could by any means 'be ſeparated from that man, as ſhe was pleaſed to 'call me, who had cauſed ſo much miſchief in the 'family.

'I was ſo enraged at this uſage, that, had not 'Amelia intervened, I believe I ſhould have applied 'to a magiſtrate for a ſearch warrant for that picture, 'which there was ſo much reaſon to ſuſpect ſhe had 'ſtolen; and which I am convinced upon a ſearch, 'we ſhould have found in her poſſeſſion.'

"Nay, it is poſſible enough," cries Miſs Matthews; "for I believe there is no wickedneſs of which the "lady is not capable."

'This agreeable letter was ſucceeded by another 'of the like comfortable kind, which informed me 'that the company in which I was, being an addi- 'tional one raiſed in the beginning of the war, was 'reduced; ſo that I was now a lieutenant on half- 'pay.

'Whilſt we were meditating on our preſent ſitua- 'tion, the good doctor came to us. When we relat- 'ed to him the manner in which my ſiſter had treated 'us, he cried out, "Poor ſoul! I pity her heartily;" 'for this is the ſevereſt reſentment he ever expreſſes; 'indeed I have often heard him ſay, that a wicked 'ſoul is the greateſt object of compaſſion in the world,' —A ſentiment which we ſhall leave the reader a little time to digeſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

In which Mr. Booth *concludes his ſtory.*

'THE next day the doctor ſet out for his par-
'ſonage, which was about thirty miles diſtant,
'whither Amelia and myſelf accompanied him, and
'where we ſtayed with him all the time of his reſidence
'there, being almoſt three months.

'The ſituation of the pariſh under my good friend's
'care is very pleaſant. It is placed among meadows,
'waſhed by a clear trout ſtream, and flanked on both
'ſides with downs. His houſe indeed would not
'much attract the admiration of the virtuoſo. He
'built it himſelf, and it is remarkable only for its
'plainneſs; with which the furniture ſo well agrees,
'that there is no one thing in it that may not be
'abſolutely neceſſary, except books, and the prints
'of Mr. Hogarth, whom he calls a moral ſatiriſt.

'Nothing, however, can be imagined more agree-
'able than the life that the doctor leads in this
'homely houſe, which he calls his earthly paradiſe.
'All his pariſhioners, whom he treats as his children,
'regard him as their common father. Once in
'a week he conſtantly viſits every houſe in the pariſh,
'examines, commends, and rebukes as he finds oc-
'caſion. This is practiſed likewiſe by his curate in
'his abſence; and ſo good an effect is produced by
'this their care, that no quarrels ever proceed either
'to blows or law ſuits; no beggar is to be found in
'the whole pariſh; nor did I ever hear a very profane
'oath all the time I lived in it.

'But to return, from ſo agreeable a digreſſion, to
'my own affairs, that are much leſs worth your atten-
'tion. In the midſt of all the pleaſures I taſted in
'this ſweet place, and in the moſt delightful com-
'pany, the woman and man whom I loved above all
'things, melancholy reflexions concerning my un-
'happy circumſtances would often ſteal into my
'thoughts. My fortune was now reduced to leſs
'than forty pounds a year; I had already two chil-
'dren, and my dear Amelia was again with child.

'One day the doctor found me ſitting by myſelf, 'and employed in melancholy contemplations on this 'ſubject. He told me he had obſerved me growing 'of late very ſerious; that he knew the occaſion, and 'neither wondered at, nor blamed me. He then aſked 'me if I had any proſpect of going again into the 'army; if not, what ſcheme of life I propoſed to 'myſelf.'

'I told him, that as I had no powerful friends, 'I could have but little expectations in a military way; 'that I was as incapable of thinking of any other 'ſcheme, as all buſineſs required ſome knowledge or 'experience, and likewiſe money to ſet up with; of 'all which I was deſtitute.

"You muſt know then," child, ſaid the doctor, "that I have been thinking on this ſubject as well as "you: for I can think, I promiſe you, with a plea- "ſant countenance." Theſe were his words. "As to "the army, perhaps, means might be found of getting "you another commiſſion; but my daughter ſeems "to have a violent objection to it; and to be plain, "I fancy you yourſelf will find no glory make you "amends for your abſence from her. And for my "part," ſaid he, "I never think thoſe men wiſe "who for any worldly intereſt forego the greateſt "happineſs of their lives. If I miſtake not," ſays he, "a country life, where you could be always together, "would make you both much happier people."

'I anſwered, that of all things I preferred it 'moſt; and I believed Amelia was of the ſame 'opinon.

'The doctor, after a little heſitation, propoſed to 'me to turn farmer, and offered to let me his parſon- 'age, which was then become vacant. He ſaid, it 'was a farm which required but little ſtock, and that 'little ſhould not be wanting.

'I embraced this offer very eagerly, and with 'great thankfulneſs, and immediately repaired to 'Amelia to communicate it to her, and to know her 'Sentiments.

'Amelia received the news with the higheſt tran- 'ſports of joy; ſhe ſaid that her greateſt fear had al-

'ways

'ways been of my entering again into the army. She 'was ſo kind as to ſay, that all ſtations of life were 'equal to her, unleſs as one afforded her more of my 'company than another.'—"And as to our children," ſaid ſhe, "let us beed them up to an humble for-"tune; and they will be contented with it: for none," 'added my angel,' "deſerves happineſs, or indeed, "are capable of it, who make any particular ſtation "a neceſſary ingredient."

'Thus, madam, you ſee me degraded from my 'former rank in life; no longer Captain Booth, but 'Farmer Booth at your ſervice.

'During my firſt year's continuance in this new 'ſcene of life, nothing, I think, remarkable hap-'pened; the hiſtory of one day would, indeed, be 'the hiſtory of the whole year.'

"Well, pray then," ſaid Miſs Matthews, do let "us hear the hiſtory of that Day; I have a ſtrange "curioſity to know how you could kill your time; "and do, if poſſible, find out the very beſt day you "can."

'If you command me, madam,' anſwered Booth 'you muſt yourſelf be accountable for the dulneſs of 'the narrative. Nay, I believe, you have impoſed 'a very difficult taſk on me; for the greateſt happi-'neſs is incapable of deſcription.'

'I roſe then, madam.'

"O the moment you waked, undoubtedly," ſaid Miſs Matthews ——

'Uſually,' ſaid he, 'between five and ſix.'

"I will have no uſually," cried Miſs Matthews, "you are confined to a day, and it is to be the beſt "and happieſt in the year."

'Nay, madam,' cries Booth, 'then I muſt tell you 'the day in which Amelia was brought to bed, after 'a painful and dangerous labour; for that I think 'was the happieſt day of my life.'

"I proteſt," ſaid ſhe, "you are become farmer "Booth, indeed. What a happineſs have you paint-"ed to my imagination! you put me in mind of a "news-paper, where my lady ſuch-a-one is delivered

" of a ſon, to the great joy of ſome illuſtrious fa-
" mily."

'Why then, I do aſſure you, Miſs Matthews,' cries Booth, 'I ſcarce know a circumſtance that 'diſtinguiſhed one day from another. The whole 'was one continued ſeries of love, health, and tran-'quillity. Our lives reſembled a calm ſea.'

" The dulleſt of all ideas," cries the lady.

'I know,' ſaid he, 'it muſt appear dull in de-'ſcription; for who can deſcribe the pleaſures which 'the morning air gives to one in perfect health; the 'flow of ſpirits which ſprings up from exerciſe; the 'delights which parents feel from the prattle, and 'innocent follies of their children; the joy with which 'the tender ſmile of a wife inſpires a huſband; or 'laſtly, the chearful, ſolid comfort which a fond cou-'ple enjoy in each other's converſation.—All theſe 'pleaſures, and every other of which our ſituation 'was capable, we taſted in the higheſt degree. Our 'happineſs was, perhaps, too great; for fortune 'ſeemed to grow envious of it, and interpoſed one 'of the moſt cruel accidents that could have befallen 'us, by robbing us of our dear friend the doctor.'

" I am ſorry for it," ſaid Miſs Matthews. " He was " indeed a valuable man, and I never heard of his " death before."

'Long may it be before any one hears of it,' cries Booth. 'He is, indeed, dead to us; but will, I 'hope, enjoy many happy years of life. You know, 'madam, the obligations he had to his patron the 'earl: indeed, it was impoſſible to be once in 'his company without hearing of them: I am 'ſure you will neither wonder that he was choſen 'to attend the young lord in his travels as his tutor, 'nor that the good man, however diſagreeable it 'might be (as in fact it was) to his inclination, 'ſhould comply with the earneſt requeſt of his friend 'and patron.

'By this means I was bereft not only of the beſt 'companion in the world, but of the beſt counſellor; 'a loſs of which I have ſince felt the bitter conſe-'quence; for no greater advantage, I am convinced,

'can arrive to a young man who hath any degree 'of underſtanding, than an intimate converſe with 'one of riper years, who is not only able to adviſe, 'but who knows the manner of adviſing. By this 'means alone, youth can enjoy the benefit of the 'experience of age, and that at a time of life when 'ſuch experience will be of more ſervice to a man 'than when he hath lived long enough to acquire it 'of himſelf.

'From want of my ſage counſellor, I now fell 'into many errors. The firſt of theſe was in enlarg- 'ing my buſineſs, by adding a farm of one hundred 'a year to the parſonage; in renting which I had alſo 'as bad a bargain as the doctor had before given me 'a good one. The conſequence of which was, that 'whereas at the end of the firſt year, I was worth 'upwards of fourſcore pounds; at the end of the 'ſecond, I was near half that ſum worſe (as the phraſe 'is) than nothing.

'A ſecond folly I was guilty of, in uniting families 'with the curate of the pariſh, who had juſt married, 'as my wife and I thought, a very good ſort of a wo- 'man. We had not, however, lived one month to- 'gether before I plainly perceived this good ſort of 'woman had taken a great prejudice againſt my Ame- 'lia; for which, if I had not known ſomething of 'the human paſſions, and that high place which envy 'holds among them, I ſhould not have been able to 'account: for ſo far was my angel from having given 'her any cauſe of diſlike, that ſhe had treated her not 'only with civility, but kindneſs.

'Beſides ſuperiority in beauty, which, I believe, 'all the world would have allowed to Amelia, there 'was another cauſe of this envy, which I am almoſt 'aſhamed to mention, as it may well be called my 'greateſt folly. You are to know then, madam, that 'from a boy I had been always fond of driving a 'coach, in which I valued myſelf on having ſome 'ſkill. This, perhaps, was an innocent, but I allow 'it to have been a childiſh vanity. As I had an op- 'portunity, therefore, of buying an old coach and 'harneſs very cheap (indeed they coſt me but twelve

'pounds) and as I conſidered the ſame horſes which 'drew my waggons, would likewiſe draw my coach, 'I reſolved on indulging myſelf in the purchaſe.

'The conſequence of ſetting up this poor old coach 'is inconceivable. Before this, as my wife and my-'ſelf had very little diſtinguiſhed ourſelves from the 'other farmers and their wives, either in our dreſs, 'or our way of living, they treated us as their equals; 'but now they began to conſider us as elevating our-'ſelves into a ſtate of ſuperiority, and immediately 'began to envy, hate, and declared war againſt us. 'The neighbouring little ſquires too, were uneaſy to 'ſee a poor renter become their equal in a matter in 'which they placed ſo much dignity; and not doubt-'ing but it aroſe in me from the ſame oſtentation, 'they began to hate me likewiſe, and to turn my 'equipage into ridicule; aſſerting that my horſes, 'which were as well matched as any in the kingdom, 'were of different colours and ſizes; with much more 'of that kind of wit, the only baſis of which is lying.

'But what will appear moſt ſurpriſing to you, ma-'dam, was, that the curate's wife, who being lame, 'had more uſe of the coach than my Amelia (indeed, 'ſhe ſeldom went to church in any other manner) 'was one of my bittereſt enemies on the occaſion. 'If ſhe had ever any diſpute with Amelia, which all 'the ſweetneſs of my poor girl could not ſometimes 'avoid, ſhe was ſure to introduce with a malicious 'ſneer,' "Though my huſband doth not keep a "coach, madam." 'Nay, ſhe took this opportunity 'to upbraid my wife with the loſs of her fortune, al-'ledging,' "That ſome folks might have had as good "pretenſions to a coach as other folks, and a better "too, as they brought a better fortune to their huſ-"bands. But that all people had not the art of mak-"ing brick without ſtraw."

'You will wonder, perhaps, madam, how I can 'remember ſuch ſtuff, which, indeed, was a long 'time only matter of amuſement to both Amelia and 'myſelf; but we, at laſt, experienced the miſchievous 'nature of envy, and that it tends rather to produce 'tragical than comical events. My neighbours now

'began

'began to conſpire againſt me. They nick-named 'me, in deriſion, the Squire Farmer. Whatever I 'bought, I was ſure to buy dearer; and when I ſold, 'I was obliged to ſell cheaper than any other. In 'fact, they were all united, and while they every day 'committed treſpaſſes on my lands with impunity, if 'any of my cattle eſcaped into their fields, I was 'either forced to enter into a law-ſuit, or to make 'amends four-fold for the damage ſuſtained.'

'The conſequences of all this could be no other 'than that ruin which enſued. Without tiring you 'with particulars, before the end of four years, I 'became involved in debt near three hundred pound 'more than the value of all my effects. My landlord 'ſeized my ſtock for rent; and to avoid immediate 'confinement in priſon, I was forced to leave the 'country, with all that I held dear in the world, my 'wife, and my poor little family.

'In this condition, I arrived in town five or ſix 'days ago. I had juſt taken a lodging in the verge 'of the court, and had writ my dear Amelia word, 'where ſhe might find me, when ſhe had ſettled her 'affairs in the beſt manner ſhe could. That very even- 'ing, as I was returning home from a coffee-houſe, 'a fray happening in the ſtreet, I endeavoured to aſſiſt 'the injured party, when I was ſeized by the watch, 'and after being confined all night in the round- 'houſe, was conveyed in the morning before a juſtice 'of peace, who committed me hither; where I ſhould 'probably have ſtarved, had I not, from your hands, 'found a moſt unaccountable preſervation.—And 'here, give me leave to aſſure you, my dear Miſs 'Matthews, that whatever advantage I may have 'reaped from your misfortune, I ſincerely lament it; 'nor would I have purchaſed any relief for myſelf 'at the price of ſeeing you in this dreadful place.'

He ſpake theſe laſt words with great tenderneſs: for he was a man of conſummate good nature, and had formerly had much affection for this young lady; indeed, more than the generality of people are capable of entertaining for any perſon whatſoever.

AMELIA.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

Containing very myſterious matter.

MISS Matthews did not in the leaſt fall ſhort of Mr. Booth in expreſſions of tenderneſs. Her eyes, the moſt eloquent orators on ſuch occaſions, exerted their utmoſt force; and, at the concluſion of his ſpeech, ſhe caſt a look as languiſhingly ſweet, as ever Cleopatra gave to Anthony. In real fact, this Mr. Booth had been her firſt love, and had made more impreſſions on her young heart, which the learned in this branch of philoſophy affirm, and perhaps truly, are never to be eradicated.

When Booth had finiſhed his ſtory, a ſilence enſued of ſome minutes; an interval which the painter would deſcribe much better than the writer. Some readers may however be able to make pretty pertinent conjectures, by what I have ſaid above, eſpecially when they are told, that Miſs Matthews broke the ſilence by a ſigh, and cried, 'why is Mr. Booth unwilling to 'allow me the happineſs of thinking my misfortunes 'have been of ſome little advantage to him? ſure the 'happy Amelia would not be ſo ſelfiſh to envy me 'that pleaſure. No; not if ſhe was as much the 'fondeſt as ſhe is the happieſt of women.'—"Good "Heavens! madam," ſaid he, "do you call my poor "Amelia the happieſt of women?" 'Indeed I do,' anſwered ſhe briſkly,—'O Mr. Booth, there is a ſpeck 'of white in her fortune, which, when it falls to the 'lot of a ſenſible woman, makes her full amends for

'all

'all the croſſes which can attend her—Perhaps ſhe may 'not be ſenſible of it; but if it had been my bleſt 'fate—O Mr. Booth, could I have thought when we 'were firſt acquainted, that the moſt agreeable man in 'the world had been capable of making the kind, 'the tender, the affectionate huſband—the happy 'Amelia in thoſe days was unknown; Heaven had 'not then given her a proſpect of the happineſs it in-'tended her—but yet it did intend her: for ſure 'there is a fatality in the affairs of love; and the 'more I reflect on my own life, the more I am con-'vinced of it. O Heavens! how a thouſand little 'circumſtances crowd into my mind. When you firſt 'marched into our town, you had then the colours 'in your hand; as you paſſed under the window where 'I ſtood, my glove by accident dropt into the ſtreet; 'you ſtooped, took up my glove, and putting it upon 'the ſpike belonging to your colours, lifted it up to 'the window. Upon this a young lady, who ſtood 'by, ſaid,' "So Miſs, the young officer hath accepted "yourchallenge."—'I bluſhed then, and I bluſh now, 'when I confeſs to you, I thought you the prettieſt 'young fellow I had ever ſeen; and, upon my ſoul, 'I believe you was then the prettieſt fellow in the 'world.'—Booth here made a low bow, and cried,—'O dear madam, how ignorant was I of my own 'happineſs.'—'Would you really have thought ſo?' anſwered ſhe, 'however, there is ſome politeneſs, if 'there be no ſincerity in what you ſay.' Here the governor of the enchanted caſtle interrupted them, and entering the room without any ceremony, acquainted the lady and gentleman, that it was locking-up time; and addreſſing Booth, by the name of captain, aſked him if he would not pleaſe to have a bed; adding, that he might have one in the next room to the lady, but that it would come dear; for that he never let a bed in that room under a guinea, nor could he afford it cheaper to his father.

No anſwer was made to this propoſal; but Miſs Matthews, who had already learnt ſome of the ways of the houſe, ſaid, ſhe believed Mr. Booth would like to drink a glaſs of ſomething; upon which the go-

vernor immediately trumpeted forth the praiſes of his rack-punch, and without waiting for any further commands, preſently produced a large bowl of that liquor.

The governor having recommended the goodneſs of his punch by a hearty draught, began to revive the other matter, ſaying, that he was juſt going to bed, and muſt firſt lock up.—'But ſuppoſe,' ſaid Miſs Matthews, with a ſmile, 'the captain and I ſhould 'have a mind to ſit up all night.'—'With all my 'heart, ſaid the governor; but I expect a conſideration for thoſe matters. For my part, I don't enquire into what doth not concern me; but ſingle 'and double are two things. If I lock up double, 'I expect half a guinea; and I'm ſure the captain 'cannot think that's out of the way—It is but the 'price of a bagnio.'

'Miſs Matthews's face became of the colour of ſcarlet at thoſe words—However, ſhe muſtered up her ſpirits, and turning to Booth, ſaid, "What ſay you, cap"tain? for my own part, I had never leſs inclination "to ſleep; which hath the greater charms for you, "the punch or the pillow?"—'I hope, madam,' anſwered Booth, 'you have a better opinion of me, 'than to doubt my preferring Miſs Matthew's con'verſation to either.'—"I aſſure you," replied ſhe, "it is no compliment to you, to ſay I prefer yours "to ſleep at this time."

The governor then, having received his fee, departed; and turning the key, left the gentleman and lady to themſelves.

In imitation of him, we will lock up likewiſe a ſcene which we do not think proper to expoſe to the eyes of the public. If any over curious readers ſhould be diſappointed on this occaſion, we will recommend ſuch readers to the apologies with which certain gay ladies have lately been pleaſed to oblige the world, where they will poſſibly find every thing recorded, that paſt at this interval.

But though we decline painting the ſcene, it is not our intention to conceal from the world the frailty of *Mr. Booth*, or of his fair partner, who certainly paſt

that evening, in a manner inconſiſtent with the ſtrict rules of virtue and chaſtity.

To ſay the truth, we are much more concerned for the behaviour of the gentleman, than of the lady, not only for his ſake, but for the ſake of the beſt woman in the world, whom we ſhould be ſorry to conſider as yoked to a man of no worth nor honour.

We deſire therefore the good-natured and candid reader will be pleaſed to weigh attentively the ſeveral unlucky circumſtances which concurred ſo critically, that fortune ſeemed to have uſed her utmoſt endeavours to enſnare poor Booth's conſtancy. Let the reader ſet before his eyes a fine young woman, in a manner a firſt love, conferring obligations, and uſing every art to ſoften, to allure, to win, and to enflame; let him conſider the time and place; let him remember that Mr. Booth was a young fellow in the higheſt vigour of life; and, laſtly, let him add one ſingle circumſtance, that the parties were alone together; and then if he will not acquit the defendant, he muſt be convicted; for I have nothing more to ſay in his defence.

CHAP. II.

The latter part of which we expect will pleaſe our reader better than the former.

A Whole week did our lady and gentleman live in this criminal converſation, in which the happineſs of the former was much more perfect than that of the latter; for though the charms of Miſs Matthews, and her exceſſive endearments, ſometimes lulled every thought in the ſweet lethargy of pleaſure; yet in the intervals of his fits, his virtue alarmed and rouſed him, and brought the image of poor injured Amelia to haunt and torment him. In fact, if we regard this world only, it is the intereſt of every man to be either perfectly good, or completely bad. He had better deſtroy his conſcience, than gently wound it. The many bitter reflections which every bad action

coſts

coſts a mind in which there are any remains of goodneſs, are not to be compenſated by the higheſt pleaſures which ſuch an action can produce.

So it happened to Mr. Booth. Repentance never failed to follow his tranſgreſſions; and yet ſo perverſe is our judgment, and ſo ſlippery is the deſcent of vice, when once we are entered into it; the ſame crime which he now repented of, became a reaſon for doing that which was to cauſe his future repentance; and he continued to ſin on, becauſe he had begun. His repentance however returned ſtill heavier and heavier, till at laſt it flung him into a melancholy, which Miſs Matthews plainly perceived, and at which ſhe could not avoid expreſſing ſome reſentment in obſcure hints, and ironical complements on Amelia's ſuperiority to her whole ſex, who could not cloy a gay young fellow by many years poſſeſſion. She would then repeat the compliments which others had made to her own beauty —and could not forbear once crying out: 'Upon my 'ſoul! my dear Billy, I believe the chief diſadvan'tage on my ſide, is in my ſuperior fondneſs; for 'love, in the minds of men, hath one quality at 'leaſt of a fever, which is to prefer coldneſs in the 'object. Confeſs, dear Will, is there not ſomething 'vaſtly refreſhing in the cool air of a prude.'— Booth fetched a deep ſigh, and begged her never more to mention Amelia's name.—'O Will,' cries ſhe, 'did 'that requeſt proceed from the motive I could wiſh, 'I ſhould be the happieſt of womankind.——'You 'would not ſure, madam,' ſaid Booth, 'deſire a ſa'crifice, which I muſt be a villain to make to any?'— 'Deſire!' anſwered ſhe, 'are there any bounds to the 'deſires of love! have not I been ſacrificed? hath not 'my firſt love been torn from my bleeding heart?— 'I claim a prior right—As for ſacrifices, I can make 'them too! and would ſacrifice the whole world at 'the leaſt call of my love.'

Here ſhe delivered a letter to Booth, which ſhe had received within an hour, the contents of which were theſe:

'Deareſt

'Dearest madam,

'THOSE only who truly know what love is, can 'have any conception of the horrors I felt at 'hearing of your confinement at my arrival in town, 'which was this morning. I immediately sent my 'lawyer to enquire into the particulars, who brought 'me the agreeable news that the man whose heart's 'blood ought not to be valued at the rate of a single 'hair of your's, is entirely out of all danger, and 'that you might be admitted to bail. I presently 'ordered him to go with two of my tradesmen, who 'are to be bound in any sum for your appearance, if 'he should be mean enough to prosecute you. Though 'you may expect my attorney with you soon, I would 'not delay sending this, as I hope the news will be 'agreeable to you. My chariot will attend at the 'same time to carry you wherever you please. You 'may easily guess what a violence I have done to 'myself in not waiting on you in person; but I, who 'know your delicacy, feared it might offend, and 'that you might think me ungenerous enough to 'hope from your distresses an happiness, which I am 'resolved to owe to your free gift alone, when your 'good-nature shall induce you to bestow on me what 'no man living can merit. I beg you will pardon 'all the contents of this hasty letter, and do me the 'honour of believing me,

'Dearest madam,

'Your most passionate admirer,

'and most obedient humble servant,

'DAMON.'

Booth thought he had somewhere before seen the same hand; but in his present hurry of spirits could not recollect whose it was; nor did the lady give him any time for reflection: for he had scarce read the letter when she produced a little bit of paper, and cried out, 'here, Sir, here are the contents which he 'fears will offend me.' She then put a bank bill of a hundred pounds into Mr. Booth's hands, and asked him

him with a ſmile, if he did not think ſhe had reaſon to be offended with ſo much inſolence.

Before Booth could return any anſwer, the governor arrived and introduced Mr. Rogers the attorney, who acquainted the lady that he had brought her diſcharge from her confinement, and that a chariot waited at the door to attend her wherever ſhe pleaſed.

She received the diſcharge from Mr. Rogers, and ſaid ſhe was very much obliged to the gentleman who employed him, but that ſhe would not make uſe of the chariot, as ſhe had no notion of leaving that wretched place in a triumphant manner: in which reſolution, when the attorney found her obſtinate, he withdrew, as did the governor with many bows, and as many ladyſhips.

They were no ſooner gone, than Booth aſked the lady why ſhe would refuſe the chariot of a gentleman who had behaved with ſuch exceſſive reſpect. She looked earneſtly upon him, and cried, 'How unkind 'is that queſtion! do you imagine I would go and 'leave you in ſuch a ſituation? thou knoweſt but little of Caliſta. Why, do you think I would accept 'this hundred pound from a man I diſlike, unleſs it 'was to be ſerviceable to the man I love? I inſiſt on 'your taking it as your own, and uſing whatever you 'want of it.'

Booth proteſted in the ſolemneſt manner, that he would not touch a ſhilling of it, ſaying, he had already received too many obligations at her hands, and more than ever he ſhould be able, he feared, to repay. 'How 'unkind,' anſwered ſhe, 'is every word you ſay? 'why will you mention obligations? love never confers any. It doth every thing for its own ſake. I am 'not therefore obliged to the man whoſe paſſion makes 'him generous: for I feel how inconſiderable the 'whole world would appear to me, if I could throw 'it after my heart.'

Much more of this kind paſſed, ſhe ſtill preſſing the bank-note upon him, and he as abſolutely refuſing, till Booth left the lady to dreſs herſelf, and went to walk in the area of the priſon.

Miſs

Miſs Matthews now applied to the governor to know by what means ſhe might procure the captain his liberty. The governor anſwered, 'as he cannot get 'bail, it will be a difficult matter; and money to be 'ſure there muſt be: for people, no doubt, expect to 'touch on theſe occaſions. When priſoners have not 'wherewithal as the law requires to entitle themſelves 'to juſtice, why they muſt be beholden to other peo-'ple, to give them their liberty; and people will not 'to be ſure ſuffer others to be beholden to them for 'nothing, whereof there is good reaſon: for how 'ſhould we all live, if it was not for theſe things!—" Well, well," ſaid ſhe, "and how much will it coſt."—'How much!' anſwered he,—'How much! why, 'let me ſee.'—Here he heſitated ſome time, and then anſwered, 'that for five guineas he would undertake 'to procure the captain his diſcharge.' That being the ſum which he computed to remain in the lady's pocket; for as to the gentleman's, he had long been acquainted with the emptineſs of it.

Miſs Matthews, to whom money was as dirt (indeed ſhe may be thought not to have known the value of it) delivered him the bank-bill, and bid him get it changed: for if the whole, ſays ſhe, will procure him his liberty, he ſhall have it this evening.

'The whole, madam,' anſwered the governor, as ſoon as he had recovered his breath: for it almoſt forſook him at the ſight of the black word hundred. 'No, 'no.—There might be people indeed—but I am not 'one of thoſe. A hundred! no, nor nothing like it. '—As for myſelf, as I ſaid, I will be content with 'five guineas, and I am ſure that's little enough.' What other people will expect, I cannot exactly ſay.' '—To be ſure his worſhip's clerk will expect to touch' 'pretty handſomely; as for his worſhip himſelf, he 'never touches any thing, that is, not to ſpeak of; 'but then the conſtable will expect ſomething, and the 'watchmen muſt have ſomething, and the lawyers on 'both ſides they muſt have their fees for finiſhing.'—" Well," ſaid ſhe, "I leave all to you. If it coſts me "twenty pounds I will have him diſcharged this after-"noon.—But you muſt give his diſcharge into my "hands,

" hands, without letting the captain know any thing " of the matter."

The governor promiſed to obey her commands in every particular; nay, he was ſo very induſtrious, that though dinner was juſt then coming upon the table, at her earneſt requeſt, he ſet out immediately on the purpoſe, and went, as he ſaid, in purſuit of the lawyer.

All the other company aſſembled at table as uſual, where poor Booth was the only perſon out of ſpirits. This was imputed by all preſent to a wrong cauſe; nay, Miſs Matthews herſelf either could not, or would not, ſuſpect that there was any thing deeper than the deſpair of being ſpeedily diſcharged, that lay heavy on his mind.

However, the mirth of the reſt, and a pretty liberal quantity of punch, which he ſwallowed after dinner (for Miſs Matthews had ordered a very large bowl at her own expence, to entertain the good company at her farewel) ſo far exhilirated his ſpirits, that, when the young lady and he retired to their tea, he had all the marks of gaiety in his countenance, and his eyes ſparkled with good humour.

The gentleman and lady had ſpent about two hours in tea and converſation, when the governor returned, and privately delivered to the lady the diſcharge for her friend, and the ſum of eighty-two pounds five ſhillings; the reſt having been, he ſaid, diſburſed in the buſineſs, of which he was ready at any time to render an exact account.

Miſs Matthews being again alone with Mr. Booth, ſhe put the diſcharge into his hands, deſiring him to aſk her no queſtions; and adding, 'I think, ſir, we 'have neither of us now any thing more to do at this 'place.' She then ſummoned the governor, and ordered a bill of that day's expence, for long ſcores were not uſual there; and at the ſame time ordered a hackney-coach, without having yet determined whither ſhe would go, but fully determined ſhe was, wherever ſhe went, to take Mr. Booth with her.

The governor was now approaching with a long roll of paper, when a faint voice was heard to cry out *haſtily*, Where is he?—and preſently a female ſpectre,

all

all pale and breathleſs, ruſhed into the room, and fell into Mr. Booth's arms, where ſhe immediately fainted away.

Booth made a ſhift to ſupport his lovely burthen; though he was himſelf in a condition very little different from hers. Miſs Matthews likewiſe, who preſently recollected the face of Amelia, was ſtruck motionleſs with the ſurprize; nay, the governor himſelf, though not eaſily moved at ſight of horror, ſtood aghaſt, and neither offered to ſpeak nor ſtir.

Happily for Amelia, the governeſs of the manſions had out of curioſity followed her into the room, and was the only uſeful perſon preſent on this occaſion; ſhe immediately called for water, and ran to the lady's aſſiſtance, fell to looſening her ſtays, and performed all the offices proper at ſuch a ſeaſon; which had ſo good an effect, that Amelia ſoon recovered the diſorder which the violent agitation of her ſpirits had cauſed, and found herſelf alive and awake in her huſband's arms.

Some tender careſſes, and a ſoft whiſper or two paſt privately between Booth and his lady; nor was it without great difficulty, that poor Amelia put ſome reſtraint on her fondneſs, in a place ſo improper for a tender interview. She now caſt her eyes round the room, and fixing them on Miſs Matthews, who ſtood like a ſtatue; ſhe ſoon recollected her, and addreſſing her by her name, ſaid, 'Sure, madam, I cannot be miſ-'taken in thoſe features; though meeting you here 'might almoſt make me ſuſpect my memory.'

Miſs Matthews's face was now all covered with ſcarlet. The reader may eaſily believe ſhe was on no account pleaſed with Amelia's preſence; indeed, ſhe expected from her ſome of thoſe inſults, of which virtuous women are generally ſo liberal to a frail ſiſter; but ſhe was miſtaken, Amelia was not one

Who thought the nation ne'er could thrive,
Till all the whores were burnt alive.

Her virtue could ſupport itſelf with its own intrinſic worth, without borrowing any aſſiſtance from the vices of other women; and ſhe conſidered their natural infirmities

mities as the objects of pity, not of contempt or abhorrence.

When Amelia therefore perceived the visible confusion in Miss Matthews, she presently called to remembrance some stories which she had imperfectly heard; for as she was not naturally attentive to scandal, and had kept very little company since her return to England, she was far from being a mistress of the lady's whole history. However, she had heard enough to impute her confusion to the right cause; she advanced to her, and told her she was extremely sorry to meet her in such a place, but hoped that no very great misfortune was the occasion of it.

Miss Matthews began, by degrees, to recover her spirits. She answered with a reserved air, 'I am much 'obliged to you, madam, for your concern; we are 'all liable to misfortunes in this world. Indeed, I 'know not why I should be much ashamed of being 'in any place where I am in such good company.'

Here Booth interposed. He had before acquainted Amelia in a whisper, that his confinement was at an end. 'The unfortunate accident, my dear,' said he, 'which brought this young lady to this melancholy 'place, is entirely determined; and she is now as ab'solutely at her liberty as myself.'

Amelia imputing the extreme coldness and reserve of the lady to the cause already mentioned, advanced still more and more in proportion as she drew back; till the governor, who had withdrawn some time, returned, and acquainted Miss Matthews that her coach was at the door; upon which, the company soon separated. Amelia and Booth went together in Amelia's coach, and poor Miss Matthews was obliged to retire alone, after having satisfied the demands of the governor, which in one day only had amounted to a pretty considerable sum: for he with great dexterity proportioned the bills to the abilities of his guests.

It may seem perhaps wonderful to some readers, that Miss Matthews should have maintained that cold reserve towards Amelia, so as barely to keep within the *rules* of civility, instead of embracing an opportunity which seemed to offer, of gaining some degree of intimacy

macy with a wife, whoſe huſband ſhe was ſo fond of; but beſides that, her ſpirits were entirely diſconcerted by ſo ſudden and unexpected a diſappointment; and beſides the extreme horrors which ſhe conceived at the preſence of her rival, there is, I believe, ſomething ſo outrageouſly ſuſpicious in the nature of all vice, eſpecially when joined with any great degree of pride, that the eyes of thoſe whom we imagine privy to our failings, are intolerable to us, and we are apt to aggravate their opinions to our diſadvantage far beyond the reality.

CHAP. III.

Containing wiſe obſervations of the author, and other matters.

THERE is nothing more difficult than to lay down any fixed and certain rules for happineſs; or indeed to judge with any preciſion of the happineſs of others, from the knowledge of external circumſtances. There is ſometimes a little ſpeck of black in the brighteſt and gayeſt colours of fortune, which contaminates and deadens the whole. On the contrary, when all without looks dark and diſmal, there is often a ſecret ray of light within the mind, which turns every thing to real joy and gladneſs.

I have in the courſe of my life ſeen many occaſions to make this obſervation; and Mr. Booth was at preſent a very pregnant inſtance of its truth. He was juſt delivered from a priſon, and in the poſſeſſion of his beloved wife and children; and (which might be imagined greatly to augment his joy) fortune had done all this for him within an hour, without giving him the leaſt warning or reaſonable expectation of this ſtrange reverſe in his circumſtances; and yet it is certain, that there were very few men in the world, more ſeriouſly miſerable than he was at this inſtant. A deep melancholy ſeized his mind, and cold damp ſweats overſpread his perſon, ſo that he was ſcarce animated; and poor Amelia, inſtead of a fond warm huſband, beſtowed her careſſes on a dull lifeleſs lump of clay. He endeavoured however at firſt, as much as poſſible, to conceal what he felt, and attempted what is the hardeſt

of

of all taſks, to act the part of a happy man; but he found no ſupply of ſpirits to carry on this deceit, and would have probably ſunk under his attempt, had not poor Amelia's ſimplicity helped him to another fallacy, in which he had much better ſucceſs.

This worthy woman very plainly perceived the diſorder in her huſband's mind; and having no doubt of the cauſe of it, eſpecially when ſhe ſaw the tears ſtand in his eyes at the ſight of his children, threw her arms round his neck, and embracing him with rapturous fondneſs, cried out, 'My dear Billy, let no-'thing make you uneaſy. Heaven will, I doubt not, 'provide for us and theſe poor babes. Great for-'tunes are not neceſſary to happineſs. For my own 'part, I can level my mind with any ſtate; and for 'thoſe poor little things, whatever condition of life 'we breed them to, that will be ſufficient to maintain 'them in. How many thouſands abound in affluence, whoſe fortunes are much lower than ours! for 'it is not from nature, but from education and habit, 'that our wants are chiefly derived. Make yourſelf 'eaſy therefore, my dear love; for you have a wife 'who will think herſelf happy with you, and endeavour to make you ſo in any ſituation. Fear no-'thing, Billy; induſtry will always provide us a 'wholeſome meal; and I will take care, that neatneſs and chearfulneſs ſhall make it a pleaſant one.'

Booth preſently took the cue, which ſhe had given him. He fixed his eyes on her for a minute, with great earneſtneſs and inexpreſſible tenderneſs; and then cried, 'O my Amelia, how much are you my 'ſuperior in every perfection! how wiſe, how great, 'how noble are your ſentiments! why can I not imitate what I ſo much admire? why can I not look 'with your conſtancy, on thoſe dear little pledges of 'our loves? All my philoſophy is baffled with the 'thought, that my Amelia's children are to ſtruggle 'with a cruel, hard, unfeeling world, and to buffet 'thoſe waves of fortune, which have overwhelmed 'their father.—Here I own I want your firmneſs, and 'am not without an excuſe for wanting it; for am I 'not the cruel cauſe of all your wretchedneſs? have

'I not

'I not ſtepped between you and fortune, and being 'the curſed obſtacle to all your greatneſs and happi-'neſs?'

"Say not ſo, my love," anſwered ſhe. "Great I "might have been, but never happy with any other "man. Indeed, dear Billy, I laugh at the fears you "formerly raiſed in me; what ſeemed ſo terrible at "a diſtance, now it approaches nearer, appears to "have been a mere bugbear—and let this comfort "you, that I look on myſelf at this day as the hap-"pieſt of women; nor have I done any thing which "I do not rejoice in, and would, if I had the gift "of preſcience, do again."

Booth was ſo overcome with this behaviour, that he had no words to anſwer. To ſay the truth, it was difficult to find any worthy of the occaſion. He threw himſelf proſtrate at her feet, whence poor Amelia was forced to uſe all her ſtrength as well as entreaties to raiſe, and place him in his chair.

Such is ever the fortitude of perfect innocence, and ſuch the depreſſion of guilt in minds not utterly abandoned. Booth was naturally of a ſanguine temper; nor would any ſuch apprehenſions as he mentioned have been ſufficient to have reſtrained his joy, at meeting with his Amelia. In fact, a reflection on the injury he had done her was the ſole cauſe of his grief. This it was that enervated his heart, and threw him into agonies, which all that profuſion of heroic tenderneſs that the moſt excellent of women intended for his comfort, ſerved only to heighten and aggravate; as the more ſhe roſe in his admiration, the more ſhe quickened his ſenſe of his own unworthineſs.

After a diſagreeable evening, the firſt of that kind that he had ever paſt with his Amelia, in which he had the utmoſt difficulty to force a little cheerfulneſs, and in which her ſpirits were at length overpowered by diſcerning the oppreſſion on his, they retired to reſt, or rather to miſery, which need not be deſcribed.

The next morning at breakfaſt, Booth began to recover a little from his melancholy, and to taſte the company of his children. He now firſt thought of enquiring of Amelia, by what means ſhe had diſcover-

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ed the place of his confinement. Amelia, after gently rebuking him for not having himſelf acquainted her with it, informed him, that it was known all over the country, and that ſhe had traced the original of it to her ſiſter; who had ſpread the news with a malicious joy, and added a circumſtance, which would have frightened her to death, had not her knowledge of him made her give little credit to it, which was, that he was committed for murder. But though ſhe had diſcredited this part, ſhe ſaid, the not hearing from him, during ſeveral ſucceſſive poſts, made her too apprehenſive of the reſt. That ſhe got a conveyance therefore for herſelf and children to Saliſbury; from whence the ſtage-coach had brought them to town, and having depoſited the children at his lodging, of which he had ſent her an account on his firſt arrival in town, ſhe took a hack, and came directly to the priſon where ſhe heard he was, and where ſhe found him.

Booth excuſed himſelf, and with truth as to his not having writ: for in fact, he had writ twice from the priſon, though he had mentioned nothing of his confinement; but as he ſent away his letters after nine at night, the fellow, to whom they were entruſted, had burnt them both for the ſake of putting the twopence in his own pocket, or rather in the pocket of the keeper of the next gin-ſhop.

As to the account which Amelia gave him, it ſerved rather to raiſe than to ſatisfy his curioſity. He began to ſuſpect, that ſome perſon had ſeen both him and Miſs Matthews together in the priſon, and had confounded her caſe with his; and this the circumſtance of murder made the more probable. But who this perſon ſhould be, he could not gueſs. After giving himſelf therefore ſome pains in forming conjectures to no purpoſe, he was forced to reſt contented with his ignorance of the real truth.

Two or three days now paſt without producing any thing remarkable; unleſs it were, that Booth more and more recovered his ſpirits, and had now almoſt regained his former degree of cheerfulneſs, when the following letter arrived, again to torment him:

'Dear

'Dear Billy,

'TO convince you I am the moſt reaſonable of 'women, I have given you up three whole 'days to the unmoleſted poſſeſſion of my fortunate 'rival; I can refrain no longer from letting you 'know that I lodge in Dean-ſtreet, not far from the 'church, at the ſign of the Pelican and Trumpet; 'where I expect this evening to ſee you—Believe me, 'I am with more affection than any other woman in 'the world can be,

'My dear Billy,

'Your affectionate, fond, doating

'F. MATTHEWS.'

Booth tore the letter with rage, and threw it into the fire; reſolving never to viſit the lady more, unleſs it was to pay her the money ſhe had lent him, which he was determined to do the very firſt opportunity: for it was not at preſent in his power.

This letter threw him back into his fit of dejection, in which he had not continued long, when a packet from the country brought him the following from his friend Dr. Harriſon:

Lyons, January 21. N. S.

'SIR,

'THOUGH I am now on my return home, I 'have taken up my pen to communicate to 'you ſome news I have heard from England, which 'gives me much uneaſineſs, and concerning which I 'can indeed deliver my ſentiments with much more 'eaſe this way than any other. In my anſwer to your 'laſt, I very freely gave you my opinion, in which 'it was my misfortune to diſapprove of every ſtep 'you had taken; but thoſe were all pardonable er-'rors. Can you be ſo partial to yourſelf, upon cool 'and ſober reflection, to think what I am going to 'mention is ſo? I promiſe you, it appears to me a 'folly of ſo monſtrous a kind, that, had I heard it 'from any but a perſon of the higheſt honour, I 'ſhould have rejected it as utterly incredible. I hope, 'you already gueſs what I am about to name; ſince,

'Heaven forbid your conduct ſhould afford you any 'choice of ſuch groſs inſtances of weakneſs. In a 'word, then, you have ſet up an equipage. What 'ſhall I invent in your excuſe, either to others, or to 'myſelf? In truth, I can find no excuſe for you, and 'what is more, I am certain you can find none for 'yourſelf. I muſt deal, therefore, very plainly and 'ſincerely with you. Vanity is always contempti-'ble; but when joined with diſhoneſty, it becomes 'odious and deteſtable. At whoſe expence are you 'to ſupport this equipage? Is it not entirely at the 'expence of others? and will it not finally end in 'that of your poor wife and children? you know 'you are two years in arrears to me. If I could im-'pute this to any extraordinary or common accident, 'I think I ſhould never have mentioned it: but I 'will not ſuffer my money to ſupport the ridiculous, 'and, I muſt ſay, criminal vanity of any one. I ex-'pect therefore to find at my return, that you have 'either diſcharged my whole debt, or your equipage. 'Let me beg you ſeriouſly to conſider your circum-'ſtances and condition in life, and to remember that 'your ſituation will not juſtify any the leaſt unne-'ceſſary expence. *Simply to be poor*, ſays my favour-'ite Greek hiſtorian, *was not held ſcandalous by the 'wiſe Athenians, but highly ſo, to owe that poverty to 'our own indiſcretion.* Preſent my affection to Mrs. 'Booth, and be aſſured, that I ſhall not, without 'great reaſon, and great pain too, ever ceaſe to be,

'Your moſt faithful friend,

'R. HARRISON.'

Had this letter come at any other time, it would have given Booth the moſt ſenſible affliction; but ſo totally had the affair of Miſs Matthews poſſeſſed his mind, that, like a man in a moſt raging fit of the gout, he was ſcarce capable of any additional torture; nay, he even made an uſe of this latter epiſtle, as it ſerved to account to Amelia for that concern which he really felt on another account. The poor deceived lady therefore applied herſelf to give him comfort where he leaſt wanted it. She ſaid he might

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eaſily perceive that the matter had been miſrepreſented to the doctor, who would not, ſhe was ſure, retain the leaſt anger againſt him when he knew the real truth.

After a ſhort converſation on this ſubject, in which Booth appeared to be greatly conſoled by the arguments of his wife, they parted. He went to take a walk in the Park, and ſhe remained at home to prepare him his dinner.

He was no ſooner departed than his little boy, not quite ſix years old, ſaid to Amelia, 'La! mama, 'what is the matter with poor papa? what makes 'him look ſo as if he was going to cry? he is not 'half ſo merry as he uſed to be in the country.' Amelia anſwered, 'Oh! my dear! you papa is only 'a little thoughtful, he will be merry again ſoon.'—Then looking fondly on her children, ſhe burſt into an agony of tears, and cried, 'Oh Heavens! what 'have theſe poor little infants done? why will the barbarous world endeavour to ſtarve them, by depriving 'us of our only friend?—O my dear, your father is 'ruined, and we are undone.'—The children preſently accompanied their mother's tears, and the daughter cried—'Why, will any body hurt poor papa? hath he done any harm to any body?'—'No, 'my dear child,' ſaid the mother, 'he is the beſt man 'in the world, and therefore they hate him.' Upon which the boy, who was extremely ſenſible at his years, anſwered, 'Nay, mama, how can that be? 'have not you often told me, that if I was good, 'every body would love me?'—'All good people will,' anſwered ſhe. 'Why don't they love papa then?' replied the child, 'for I am ſure he is very good.' 'So they do, my dear,' ſaid the mother, 'but there 'are more bad people in the world, and they will 'hate you for your goodneſs.'—'Why then bad people,' cries the child, 'are loved by more than the 'good.'—'No mattter for that, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'the love of one good perſon is more worth having, 'than that of a thouſand wicked ones; nay, if there 'was no ſuch perſon in the world, ſtill you muſt be 'a good boy: for there is one in Heaven who will

'love you; and his love is better for you than that 'of all mankind.'

This little dialogue we are apprehenfive will be read with contempt by many; indeed we ſhould not have thought it worth recording, was it not for the excellent example which Amelia here gives to all mothers. This admirable woman never let a day paſs, without inſtructing her children in ſome leſſon of religion and morality. By which means ſhe had, in their tender minds, ſo ſtrongly annexed the ideas of fear and ſhame to every idea of evil of which they were ſuſceptible, that it muſt require great pains and length of habit to ſeparate them. Though ſhe was the tendereſt of mothers, ſhe never ſuffered any ſymptom of malevolence to ſhow itſelf in their moſt trifling actions without diſcouragement, without rebuke; and, if it broke forth with any rancour, without puniſhment. In which ſhe had ſuch ſucceſs, that not the leaſt marks of pride, envy, malice, or ſpite diſcovered itſelf in any of their little words or deeds.

CHAP. IV.

In which Amelia *appears in no unamiable light.*

AMELIA, with the aſſiſtance of a little girl, who was their only ſervant, had dreſt her dinner: and ſhe had likewiſe dreſt herſelf as neat as any lady, who had a regular ſet of ſervants, could have done; when Booth returned, and brought with him his friend James, whom he had met with in the Park; and who, as Booth abſolutely refuſed to dine away from his wife, to whom he had promiſed to return, had invited himſelf to dine with him. Amelia had none of that paultry pride, which poſſeſſes ſo many of her ſex, and which diſconcerts their tempers, and gives them the air and looks of furies, if their huſbands bring in an unexpected gueſt, without giving them timely warning to provide a ſacrifice to their own vanity. Amelia received her huſband's friend with the utmoſt complaiſance and good humour: ſhe made indeed ſome apology for the homelineſs of her dinner; but it was politely turned as a compliment to Mr. James's friend-

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ſhip, which could carry him where he was ſure of being ſo ill entertained; and gave not the leaſt hint how magnificently ſhe would have provided, *had ſhe expected the favour of ſo much good company.* A phraſe which is generally meant to contain not only an apology for the lady of the houſe, but a tacit ſatire on her gueſts for their intruſion, and is at leaſt a ſtrong inſinuation that they are not welcome.

Amelia failed not to enquire very earneſtly after her old friend Mrs. James, formerly Miſs Bath, and was very ſorry to find that ſhe was not in town. The truth was, as James had married out of a violent liking of, or appetite to, her perſon, poſſeſſion had ſurfeited him, and he was now grown ſo heartily tired of his wife, that ſhe had very little of his company; ſhe was forced therefore to content herſelf with being the miſtreſs of a large houſe and equipage in the country, ten months in the year by herſelf. The other two he indulged her with the diverſions of the town; but then, though they lodged under the ſame roof, ſhe had little more of her huſband's ſociety, than if they had been one hundred miles a-part. With all this, as ſhe was a woman of calm paſſions, ſhe made herſelf contented; for ſhe had never had any violent affection for James; the match was of the prudent kind, and to her advantage: for his fortune, by the death of an uncle, was become very conſiderable; and ſhe had gained every thing by the bargain but a huſband, which her conſtitution ſuffered her to be very well ſatisfied without.

When Amelia, after dinner, retired to her children, James began to talk to his friend concerning his affairs. He adviſed Booth very earneſtly to think of getting again into the army, in which he himſelf had met with ſuch ſucceſs, that he had obtained the command of a regiment, to which his brother-in-law was lieutenant-colonel. Theſe preferments they both owed to the favour of fortune only: for though there was no objection to either of their military characters; yet neither of them had any extraordinary deſert: and, if merit in the ſervice was a ſufficient recommendation, Booth, who had been twice wounded in the

the ſiege, ſeemed to have the faireſt pretenſions; but he remained a poor half-pay lieutenant, and the others were, as we have ſaid, one of them a lieutenant-colonel, and the other had a regiment. Such riſes we often ſee in life, without being able to give any ſatisfactory account of the means, and therefore aſcribe them to the good fortune of the perſon.

Both Colonel James and his brother-in-law were members of parliament: for as the uncle of the former had left him, together with his eſtate, an almoſt certain intereſt in a borough, ſo he choſe to confer this favour on Colonel Bath; a circumſtance which would have been highly immaterial to mention here, but as it ſerves to ſet forth the goodneſs of James, who endeavoured to make up in kindneſs to the family, what he wanted in fondneſs for his wife.

Colonel James then endeavoured all in his power to perſuade Booth to think again of a military life, and very kindly offered him his intereſt towards obtaining him a company in the regiment under his command. Booth muſt have been a madman in his preſent circumſtances to have heſitated one moment at accepting ſuch an offer, and he well knew Amelia, notwithſtanding her averſion to the army, was much too wiſe to make the leaſt ſcruple of giving her conſent. Nor was he, as it appeared afterwards, miſtaken in his opinion of his wife's underſtanding: for ſhe made not the leaſt objection when it was communicated to her, but contented herſelf with an expreſs ſtipulation, that wherever he was commanded to go (for the regiment was now abroad) ſhe would accompany him.

Booth therefore accepted his friend's propoſal with a profuſion of acknowledgments; and it was agreed, that Booth ſhould draw up a memorial of his pretenſions, which Colonel James undertook to preſent to ſome man of power, and to back it with all the force he had.

Nor did the friendſhip of the colonel ſtop here. 'You will excuſe me, dear Booth,' ſaid he, 'if after 'what you have told me (for he had been very explicit in revealing his affairs to him) 'I ſuſpect you muſt

'want

'want money at this time. If that be the caſe, as I am 'certain it muſt be, I have fifty pieces at your ſer-'vice.' This generoſity brought the tears into Booth's eyes; and he at length confeſſed, that he had not five guineas in the houſe; upon which, James gave him a bank-bill for twenty pounds, and ſaid he would give him thirty more the next time he ſaw him.

Thus did this generous colonel (for generous he really was to the higheſt degree) reſtore peace and comfort to this little family; and by this act of beneficence make two of the worthieſt people, two of the happieſt that evening.

Here, reader, give me leave to ſtop a minute to lament that ſo few are to be found of this benign diſpoſition; that while wantonneſs, vanity, avarice, and ambition are every day rioting and triumphing in the follies and weakneſs, the ruin and deſolation of mankind, ſcarce one man in a thouſand is capable of taſting the happineſs of others. Nay, give me leave to wonder that pride, which is conſtantly ſtruggling, and often impoſing on itſelf to gain ſome little pre-eminence, ſhould ſo ſeldom hint to us the only certain as well as laudable way of ſetting ourſelves above another man, and that is by becoming his benefactor.

CHAP. V.

Containing an eulogium upon innocence, and other grave matters.

BOOTH paſſed that evening, and all the ſucceeding day with his Amelia, without the interruption of almoſt a ſingle thought concerning Miſs Matthews, after having determined to go on the Sunday, the only day he could venture without the verge in the preſent ſtate of his affairs, and pay her what ſhe had advanced for him in the priſon. But ſhe had not ſo long patience; for the third day, while he was ſitting with Amelia, a letter was brought to him. As he knew the hand, he immediately put it in his pocket unopened, not without ſuch an alteration in his countenance, that had Amelia, who was then

playing with one of the children, caſt her eyes towards him, ſhe muſt have remarked it. This accident, however, luckily gave him time to recover himſelf: for Amelia was ſo deeply engaged with the little one, that ſhe did not even remark the delivery of the letter. The maid ſoon after returned into the room, ſaying, the chairman deſired to know if there was any anſwer to the letter.—'What letter?' cries Booth.—"The letter I gave you juſt now," anſwered the girl.—'Sure,' cries Booth, 'the child is mad; you gave me 'no letter.'—"Yes, indeed I did, ſir," ſaid the poor girl. 'Why then, as ſure as fate,' cries Booth, 'I 'threw it into the fire, in my reverie. Why, child, 'why did you not tell me it was a letter? bid the 'chairman come up—ſtay, I will go down myſelf; 'for he will otherwiſe dirt the ſtairs with his feet.'

Amelia was gently chiding the girl for her careleſſneſs, when Booth returned, ſaying, it was very true that ſhe had delivered him a letter from Colonel James, and that perhaps it might be of conſequence. 'However,' ſays he, 'I will ſtep to the coffee-houſe 'and ſend him an account of this ſtrange accident, 'which I know he will pardon in my preſent ſituation.'

Booth was overjoyed at this eſcape, which poor Amelia's total want of all jealouſy and ſuſpicion made it very eaſy for him to accompliſh: but his pleaſure was conſiderably abated, when upon opening the letter, he found it to contain, mixed with ſeveral very ſtrong expreſſions of love, ſome pretty warm ones of the upbraiding kind; but what moſt alarmed him was a hint, that it was in her power (Miſs Matthews's) to make Amelia as miſerable as herſelf. Beſides, the general knowledge of

——*Furens quid fœmina poſſit,*

he had more particular reaſons to apprehend the rage of a lady, who had given ſo ſtrong an inſtance how far ſhe could carry her revenge. She had already ſent a chairman to his lodgings, with a poſitive command *not to return* without an anſwer to her letter. This *might of* itſelf have poſſibly occaſioned a diſcovery;

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and he thought he had great reaſon to fear, that if ſhe did not carry matters ſo far as purpoſely and avowedly to reveal the ſecret to Amelia, her indiſcretion would at leaſt effect the diſcovery of that which he would at any price have concealed. Under theſe terrors he might, I believe, be conſidered as the moſt wretched of human beings.

O innocence, how glorious and happy a portion art thou to the breaſt that poſſeſſes thee? thou fearest neither the eyes nor the tongues of men. Truth, the moſt powerful of all things, is thy ſtrongeſt friend; and the brighter the light is, in which thou art diſplayed, the more it diſcovers thy tranſcendent beauties. Guilt on the contrary, like a baſe thief, ſuſpects every eye that beholds him to be privy to his tranſgreſſions, and every tongue that mentions his name, to be proclaiming them. Fraud and falſehood are his weak and treacherous allies; and he lurks trembling in the dark, dreading every ray of light, leſt it ſhould diſcover him, and give him up to ſhame and puniſhment.

While Booth was walking in the Park with all theſe horrors in his mind, he again met his friend Colonel James, who ſoon took notice of that deep concern which the other was incapable of hiding. After ſome little converſation, Booth ſaid, 'My dear colonel, I 'am ſure I muſt be the moſt inſenſible of men, if I 'did not look on you as the beſt and the trueſt friend; 'I will, therefore, without ſcruple, repoſe a confi-'dence in you of the higheſt kind. I have often made 'you privy to my neceſſities, I will now acquaint 'you with my ſhame, provided you have leiſure 'enough to give me a hearing: for I muſt open to 'you a long hiſtory, ſince I will not reveal my fault, 'without informing you, at the ſame time, of thoſe 'circumſtances, which, I hope, will in ſome meaſure 'excuſe it.'

The colonel very readily agreed to give his friend a patient hearing. So they walked directly to a coffee-houſe at the corner of Spring-Garden, where, being in a room by themſelves, Booth opened his whole heart, and acquainted the colonel with his

amour with Miſs Matthews from the very beginning, to his receiving that letter which had cauſed all his preſent uneaſineſs, and which he now delivered into his friend's hand.

The colonel read the letter very attentively twice over: (he was ſilent indeed long enough to have read it oftener) and then turning to Booth, ſaid, "Well, ſir; "and is it ſo grievous a calamity to be the object of a "young lady's affection; eſpecially of one whom you al- "low to be ſo extremely handſome?"—'Nay, but my 'dear friend,' cries Booth, 'do not jeſt with me; you 'who know my Amelia.'—"Well, my dear friend," anſwered James, "and you know Amelia, and this "lady too—But what would you have me do for you?" 'I would have you give me your advice,' ſays Booth, 'by what method I ſhall get rid of this dreadful wo- 'man without a diſcovery.'—"And do you really," cries the other, "deſire to get rid of her?"—'Can you 'doubt it,' ſaith Booth, 'after what I have com- 'municated to you, and after what you yourſelf have 'ſeen in my family? for I hope, notwithſtanding 'this fatal ſlip, I do not appear to you in the light 'of a profligate.'—"Well," anſwered James, "and "whatever light I may appear to you in, if you are "really tired of the lady, and if ſhe be really what "you have repreſented her, I'll endeavour to take her "off your hands; but I inſiſt upon it, that you do "not deceive me in any particular." Booth proteſted in the moſt ſolemn manner, that every word which he had ſpoken was ſtrictly true; and being aſked whether he would give his honour never more to viſit the lady, he aſſured James that he never would. He then, at his friend's requeſt, delivered him Miſs Matthews's letter, in which was a ſecond direction to her lodgings, and declared to him, that if he could bring him ſafely out of this terrible affair, he ſhould think himſelf to have a ſtill higher obligation to his friendſhip, than any which he had already received from it.

Booth preſſed the colonel to go home with him to *dinner*; but he excuſed himſelf, being, as he ſaid, *already* engaged. However, he undertook in the af-

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ternoon to do all in his power, that Booth ſhould receive no more alarms from the quarter of Miſs Matthews, whom the colonel undertook to pay all the demands ſhe had on his friend. They then ſeparated. The colonel went to dinner at the King's-Arms, and Booth returned in high ſpirits to meet his Amelia.

The next day early in the morning, the colonel came to the coffee-houſe, and ſent for his friend, who lodged but at a little diſtance. The colonel told him he had a little exaggerated the lady's beauty; however, he ſaid, he excuſed that; 'for you might think 'perhaps,' cries he, 'that your inconſtancy to the 'fineſt woman in the world, might want ſome excuſe. 'Be that as it will,' ſaid he, 'you may make your-'ſelf eaſy, as it will be, I am convinced, your own 'fault, if you have ever any further moleſtation from 'Miſs Matthews.'

Booth poured forth very warmly a great profuſion of gratitude on this occaſion; and nothing more anywiſe material paſt at this interview, which was very ſhort, the colonel being in a great hurry, as he had he ſaid, ſome buſineſs of very great importance to tranſact that morning.

The colonel had now ſeen Booth twice, without remembering to give him the thirty pounds. This the latter imputed entirely to forgetfulneſs; for he had always found the promiſes of the former to be equal in value with the notes or bonds of other people. He was more ſurpriſed at what happened the next day, when meeting his friend in the Park, he received only a cold ſalute from him; and though he paſt him five or ſix times, and the colonel was walking with a ſingle officer of no great rank, and with whom he ſeemed in no earneſt converſation; yet could not Booth, who was alone, obtain any further notice from him.

This gave the poor man ſome alarm; though he could ſcarce perſuade himſelf there was any deſign in all this coldneſs or forgetfulneſs. Once he imagined that he had leſſened himſelf in the colonel's opinion, by having diſcovered his inconſtancy to Amelia; but the known character of the other, preſently

cured him of this ſuſpicion, for he was a perfect li bertine with regard to women; that being indeed th principal blemiſh in his character, which otherwiſ might have deſerved much commendation for good nature, generoſity, and friendſhip. But he carrie this one to a moſt unpardonable height; and made n ſcruple of openly declaring, that if he ever liked woman well enough to be uneaſy on her account, h would cure himſelf, if he could, by enjoying hei whatever might be the conſequence.

Booth could not, therefore, be perſuaded that th colonel would ſo highly reſent in another a fault, c which he was himſelf moſt notoriouſly guilty. Afte much conſideration, he could derive this behaviou from nothing better than a capriciouſneſs in his friend' temper, from a kind of inconſtancy of mind, whic makes men grow weary of their friends, with n more reaſon than they often are of their miſtreſſes To ſay the truth, there are jilts in friendſhip as wel as in love; and by the behaviour of ſome men i both, one would almoſt imagine that they induſtriouſl ſought to gain the affections of others, with a viei only of making the parties miſerable.

This was the conſequence of the colonel's behaviou to Booth. Former calamities had afflicted him; bu this almoſt diſtracted him; and the more ſo, as he wa not able well to account for ſuch conduct, nor to con ceive the reaſon of it.

Amelia, at his return, preſently perceived the diſturb ance in his mind, though he endeavoured with hi utmoſt power to hide it; and he was at length pre vailed upon by her entreaties to diſcover to her th cauſe of it; which ſhe no ſooner heard, than ſhe ap plied as judicious a remedy to his diſordered ſpirits as either of thoſe great mental phyſicians, Tully, o Ariſtotle, could have thought of. She uſed many ar guments to perſuade him that he was in an error and had miſtaken forgetfulneſs and careleſſneſs for deſigned neglect.

But as this phyſic was only eventually good, an as its efficacy depended on her being in the right, point in which ſhe was not apt to be too poſitive, ſh

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thought fit to add ſome conſolation of a more certain and poſitive kind, 'Admit,' ſaid ſhe, 'my dear, 'that Mr. James ſhould prove the unaccountable per-'ſon you have ſuſpected, and ſhould, without being 'able to alledge any cauſe, withdraw his friendſhip 'from you (for ſurely the accident of burning his 'letter is too trifling and ridiculous to mention) why 'ſhould this grieve you? the obligations he hath con-'ferred on you, I allow, ought to make his misfor-'tunes almoſt your own; but they ſhould not, I 'think, make you ſee his faults ſo very ſenſibly, eſ-'pecially when, by one of the greateſt faults in the 'world committed againſt yourſelf, he hath conſidera-'bly leſſened all obligations: for ſure, if the ſame 'perſon who hath contributed to my happineſs at 'one time, doth every thing in his power maliciouſly 'and wantonly to make me miſerable at another, I 'am very little obliged to ſuch a perſon. And let 'it be a comfort to my dear Billy, that however 'other friends may prove falſe and fickle to him, he 'hath one friend, whom no inconſtancy of her own, 'nor any change of his fortune, nor time, nor age, 'nor ſickneſs, nor any accident can ever alter; but 'who will eſteem, will love, and doat on him for 'ever.' So ſaying, ſhe flung her ſnowy arms about his neck, and gave him a careſs ſo tender, that it ſeemed almoſt to balance all the malice of his fate.

And, indeed, the behaviour of Amelia would have made him completely happy, in defiance of all adverſe circumſtances, had it not been for thoſe bitter ingredients which he himſelf had thrown into his cup; and which prevented him from truly reliſhing his Amelia's ſweetneſs, by cruelly reminding him how unworthy he was of this excellent creature.

Booth did not long remain in the dark as to the conduct of James, which, at firſt, appeared to him to be ſo great a myſtery; for this very afternoon he received a letter from Miſs Matthews, which unravelled the whole affair. By this letter, which was full of bitterneſs and upbraiding, he diſcovered that James was his rival with that lady, and was, indeed, the identical perſon who had ſent the hundred pound note to

Miſs

Miſs Matthews, when in the priſon. He had reaſon to believe likewiſe, as well by the letter as by other circumſtances, that James had been hitherto an unſucceſsful lover: for the lady, though ſhe had forfeited all title to virtue, had not yet ſo far forfeited all pretenſions to delicacy, as to be, like the dirt in the ſtreet, indifferently common to all. She diſtributed her favours only to thoſe ſhe liked, in which number that gentleman had not the happineſs of being included.

When Booth had made this diſcovery, he was not ſo little verſed in human nature, as any longer to heſitate at the true motive of the colonel's conduct; for he well knew how odious a ſight a happy rival is to an unfortunate lover. I believe he was, in reality, glad to aſſign the cold treatment he had received from his friend to a cauſe which, however unjuſtifiable, is, at the ſame time, highly natural; and to acquit him of a levity, fickleneſs, and caprice, which he muſt have been unwillingly obliged to have ſeen in a much worſe light.

He now reſolved to take the firſt opportunity of accoſting the colonel, and of coming to a perfect explanation upon the whole matter. He debated likewiſe with himſelf, whether he ſhould not throw himſelf at Amelia's feet, and confeſs a crime to her, which he found ſo little hopes of concealing, and which he foreſaw would occaſion him ſo many difficulties and terrors to endeavour to conceal. Happy had it been for him, had he wiſely purſued this ſtep; ſince, in all probability, he would have received immediate forgiveneſs from the beſt of women; but he had not ſufficient reſolution; or, to ſpeak, perhaps, more truely, he had too much pride to confeſs his guilt, and preferred the danger of the higheſt inconveniences to the certainty of being put to the bluſh.

CHAP. VI.

In which may appear that violence is ſometimes done to the name of love.

WHEN that happy day came, in which unhallowed hands are forbidden to contaminate *the ſhoulders of the unfortunate*, Booth went early to the

the colonel's houſe, and being admitted to his preſence, began with great freedom, though with great gentleneſs, to complain of his not having dealt with him with more openneſs. 'Why, my dear colonel,' ſaid he, 'would you not acquaint me with that ſecret 'which this letter hath diſcloſed?' James read the letter, at which his countenance changed more than once; and then, after a ſhort ſilence, ſaid, 'Mr. Booth, I 'have been to blame, I own it; and you upbraid me 'with juſtice. The true reaſon was, that I was 'aſhamed of my own folly. D—n me, Booth, if I 'have not been a moſt conſummate fool, a very dupe 'to this woman; and ſhe hath a particular pleaſure in 'making me ſo. I know what the impertinence of 'virtue is, and I can ſubmit to it; but to be treated 'thus by a whore.—You muſt forgive me, dear Booth; 'but your ſucceſs was a kind of triumph over me 'which I could not bear. I own, I have not the leaſt 'reaſon to conceive any anger againſt you; and yet, 'curſe me, if I ſhould not have been leſs diſpleaſed 'at your lying with my own wife; nay, I could al-'moſt have parted with half my fortune to you more 'willingly, than have ſuffered you to receive that 'trifle of my money, which you received at her hands. 'However, I aſk your pardon, and I promiſe you, I 'will never more think of you with the leaſt ill-will, 'on the account of this woman; but as for her, 'd—n me, if I do not enjoy her by ſome means or 'other, whatever it coſts me; for I am already above 'two hundred pounds out of pocket, without having 'ſcarce had a ſmile in return.'

Booth expreſſed much aſtoniſhment at this declaration; he ſaid, 'he could not conceive how it was poſ-'ſible to have ſuch an affection for a woman, who did 'not ſhow the leaſt inclination to return it.'—James gave her a hearty curſe, and ſaid, 'Pox of her in-'clination; I want only the poſſeſſion of her perſon; 'and that you will allow is a very fine one. But, beſides 'my paſſion for her, ſhe hath now piqued my pride; 'for how can a man of my fortune brook being re-'fuſed by a whore?'—"Since you are ſo ſet on the "buſineſs," cried Booth, "you will excuſe my ſay-

"ing

" ing ſo, I fancy you had better change your method " of applying to her: for, as ſhe is, perhaps, the " vaineſt woman upon earth, your bounty may proba- " bly do you little ſervice; nay, may rather actually " diſoblige her. Vanity is plainly her predominant " paſſion, and, if you will adminiſter to that, it will " infallibly throw her into your arms. To this I at- " tribute my own unfortunate ſucceſs. While ſhe re- " lieved my wants and diſtreſſes, ſhe was daily feeding " her own vanity; whereas, as every gift of your's aſ- " ſerted your ſuperiority, it rather offended than " pleaſed her. Indeed women generally love to be of " the obliging ſide; and if we examine their fa- " vourites, we ſhall find them to be much oftner ſuch " as they have conferred obligations on, than ſuch as " they have received them from."

There was ſomething in this ſpeech which pleaſed the colonel; and he ſaid with a ſmile, 'I don't know 'how it is, Will; but you know women better than I.' " Perhaps, colonel," anſwered Booth, "I have ſtudied " their minds more."—'I don't however much envy 'you your knowledge,' replied the other; 'for I never 'think their minds worth conſidering. However, I 'hope I ſhall profit a little by your experience with 'Miſs Matthews. Damnation ſeiſe the proud inſo- 'lent harlot! the devil take me, if I don't love her 'more than I ever loved a woman!'

The reſt of their converſation turned on Booth's affairs. The colonel again reaſſumed the part of a friend, gave him the remainder of the money, and promiſed to take the firſt opportunity of laying his memorial before a great man.

Booth was greatly overjoyed at this ſucceſs. Nothing now lay on his mind, but to conceal his frailty from Amelia, to whom he was afraid Miſs Matthews, in the rage of her reſentment, would communicate it. This apprehenſion made him ſtay almoſt conſtantly at home; and he trembled at every knock at the door. His fear moreover betrayed him into a meanneſs, which he would have heartily deſpiſed on any other occaſion. This was to order the maid to deliver him *any letter* directed to Amelia, at the ſame time ſtrictly charg-

charging her not to acquaint her miſtreſs with her having received any ſuch orders.

A ſervant of any acuteneſs would have formed ſtrange conjectures from ſuch an injunction; but this poor girl was of perfect ſimplicity; ſo great indeed was her ſimplicity, that had not Amelia been void of all ſuſpicion of her huſband, the maid would have ſoon after betrayed her maſter.

One afternoon while they were drinking tea, little Betty, ſo was the maid called, came into the room; and calling her maſter forth, delivered him a card which was directed to Amelia. Booth having read the card, on his return into the room, chid the girl for calling him, ſaying, if you can read, child, you muſt ſee it was directed to your miſtreſs.—To this the girl anſwered pertly enough. I am ſure, ſir, you ordered me to bring every letter firſt to you. This hint, with many women, would have been ſufficient to have blown up the whole affair; but Amelia, who heard what the girl ſaid, through the medium of love and confidence, ſaw the matter in a much better light than it deſerved; and looking tenderly on her huſband, ſaid, 'Indeed, 'my love, I muſt blame you for a conduct, which, 'perhaps, I ought rather to praiſe, as it proceeds only 'from the extreme tenderneſs of your affection. But, 'why will you endeavour to keep any ſecrets from me? 'believe me, for my own ſake you ought not: for as 'you cannot hide the conſequences, you make me al-'ways ſuſpect ten times worſe than the reality. While 'I have you and my children well before my eyes, I 'am capable of facing any news which can arrive: 'for what ill news can come (unleſs indeed it con-'cerns my little babe in the country) which doth not 'relate to the badneſs of our circumſtances? and thoſe, 'I thank Heaven, we have now a fair proſpect of re-'trieving. Beſides, dear Billy, though my under-'ſtanding be much inferior to your's, I have ſome-'times had the happineſs of luckily hitting on ſome 'argument which hath afforded you comfort. This 'you know, my dear, was the caſe with regard to Co-'lonel James, whom I perſuaded you to think you had 'miſtaken, and you ſee the event proved me in the right.'

' right.' So happily, both for herſelf and Mr. Booth, did the excellence of this good woman's diſpoſition deceive her, and force her to ſee every thing in the moſt advantageous light to her huſband.

The card being now inſpected, was found to contain the compliments of Mrs. James to Mrs. Booth, with an account of her being arrived in town, and having brought with her a very great cold. Amelia was overjoyed at the news of her arrival; and having dreſt herſelf in the utmoſt hurry, left her children to the care of her huſband, and ran away to pay her reſpects to her friend, whom ſhe loved with a moſt ſincere affection. But how was ſhe diſappointed, when, eager with the utmoſt impatience, and exulting with the thoughts of preſently ſeeing her beloved friend, ſhe was anſwered at the door, that the lady was not at home! nor could ſhe upon telling her name, obtain any admiſſion. This, conſidering the account ſhe had received of the lady's cold, greatly ſurpriſed her; and ſhe returned home very much vexed at her diſappointment.

Amelia, who had no ſuſpicion that Mrs. James was really at home, and, as the phraſe is, was denied, would have made a ſecond viſit the next morning, had ſhe not been prevented by a cold, which ſhe herſelf now got, and which was attended with a ſlight fever. This confined her ſeveral days to her houſe, during which Booth officiated as her nurſe, and never ſtirred from her.

In all this time ſhe heard not a word from Mrs. James, which gave her ſome uneaſineſs, but more aſtoniſhment. The tenth day, when ſhe was perfectly recovered, about nine in the evening, when ſhe and her huſband were juſt going to ſupper, ſhe heard a moſt violent thundering at the door, and preſently after a ruſtling of ſilk upon her ſtair-caſe; at the ſame time a female voice cried out pretty loud—' Bleſs me! ' what, am I to climb up another pair of ſtairs?' upon which, Amelia, who well knew the voice, preſently ran to the door, and uſhered in Mrs. James moſt ſplendidly dreſt; who put on as formal a countenance, and made as formal a courteſy to her old friend, as if ſhe had been her very diſtant acquaintance.

Poor Amelia, who was going to ruſh into her friend's arms, was ſtruck motionleſs by this behaviour; but recollecting her ſpirits, as ſhe had an excellent preſence of mind, ſhe preſently underſtood what the lady meant, and reſolved to treat her in her own way. Down therefore the company ſat, and ſilence prevailed for ſome time, during which Mrs. James ſurveyed the room with more attention than ſhe would have beſtowed on one much finer. At length the converſation began, in which the weather and the diverſions of the town were well canvaſſed. Amelia, who was a woman of great humour, performed her part to admiration; ſo that a byſtander would have doubted, in every other article than dreſs, which of the two was the moſt accompliſhed fine lady.

After a viſit of twenty minutes, during which, not a word of any former occurrences was mentioned, nor indeed any ſubject of diſcourſe ſtarted, except only thoſe two above-mentioned, Mrs. James roſe from her chair, and retired in the ſame formal manner in which ſhe had approached. We will purſue her, for the ſake of the contraſt, during the reſt of the evening. She went from Amelia directly to a route, where ſhe ſpent two hours in a croud of company, talked again and again over the diverſions and news of the town, played two rubbers at whiſt, and then retired to her own apartment, where, having paſt another hour in undreſſing herſelf, ſhe went to her own bed.

Booth and his wife, the moment their companion was gone, ſat down to ſupper on a piece of cold meat, the remains of their dinner. After which, over a pint of wine, they entertained themſelves for a while with the ridiculous behaviour of their viſitant. But Amelia declaring ſhe rather ſaw her as the object of pity than anger, turned the diſcourſe to pleaſanter topics. The little actions of their children, the former ſcenes, and future proſpects of their life, furniſhed them with many pleaſant ideas, and the contemplation of Amelia's recovery threw Booth into raptures. At length they retired happy in each other.

It is poſſible ſome readers may be no leſs ſurpriſed at the behaviour of Mrs. James, than was Amelia herſelf,

herſelf, ſince they may have perhaps received ſo favourable an impreſſion of that lady from the account given of her by Mr. Booth, that her preſent demeanour may ſeem unnatural and inconſiſtent with her former character. But they will be pleaſed to conſider the great alteration in her circumſtances, from a ſtate of dependency on a brother, who was himſelf no better than a ſoldier of fortune, to that of being wife to a man of a very large eſtate, and conſiderable rank in life. And what was her preſent behaviour more than that of a fine lady, who conſidered form and ſhow as eſſential ingredients of human happineſs, and imagined all friendſhip to conſiſt in ceremony, courteſies, meſſages, and viſits? in which opinion ſhe hath the honour to think with much the larger part of one ſex, and no ſmall number of the other.

CHAP. VII.

Containing a very extraordinary and pleaſant incident.

THE next evening Booth and Amelia went to walk in the Park with their children. They were now on the verge of the Parade, and Booth was deſcribing to his wife the ſeveral buildings round it; when, on a ſudden, Amelia miſſing her little boy, cried out, where's little Billy? upon which, Booth caſting his eyes over the graſs, ſaw a foot-ſoldier ſhaking the boy at a little diſtance. At this ſight, without making any anſwer to his wife, he leapt over the rails; and running directly up to the fellow, who had a firelock with a bayonet fixed in his hand, he ſeized him by the collar and tripped up his heels, and at the ſame time wreſted his arms from him. A ſerjeant upon duty ſeeing the affray at ſome diſtance, ran preſently up, and being told what had happened, gave the ſentinel a hearty curſe, and told him he deſerved to be hanged. A by-ſtander gave this information; for Booth was returned with his little boy to meet Amelia, who ſtaggered towards him as faſt as ſhe could, all pale and breathleſs, and ſcarce able to ſupport her *tottering* limbs. The ſerjeant now came up to Booth, to make an apology for the behaviour of the ſoldier, when

when of a ſudden he turned almoſt as pale as Amelia herſelf. He ſtood ſilent whilſt Booth was employed in comforting and recovering his wife; and then addreſſing himſelf to him, ſaid, 'Bleſs me! Lieutenant, 'could I imagine it had been your honour; and was 'it my little maſter that the raſcal uſed ſo—I am glad 'I did not know it, for I ſhould certainly have run 'my halbert into him.'

Booth preſently recognized his old faithful ſervant Atkinſon, and gave him a hearty greeting; ſaying, he was very glad to ſee him in his preſent ſituation. 'Whatever I am,' anſwered the ſerjeant, 'I ſhall 'always think I owe it to your honour.' Then taking the little boy by the hand—he cried, 'what a 'vaſt fine young gentleman maſter is grown!' and curſing the ſoldier's inhumanity, ſwore heartily he would make him pay for it.

As Amelia was much diſordered with her fright, ſhe did not recollect her foſter-brother, till he was introduced to her by Booth; but ſhe no ſooner knew him, than ſhe beſtowed a moſt obliging ſmile on him; and calling him by the name of honeſt Joe, ſaid ſhe was heartily glad to ſee him in England.—'See, my dear,' cries Booth, 'what preferment your old friend is come 'to. You would ſcarce know him, I believe, in his pre'ſent ſtate of finery.'—"I am very well pleaſed to ſee "it," anſwered Amelia, "and I wiſh him joy of being "made an officer, with all my heart." In fact, from what Mr. Booth ſaid, joined to the ſerjeant's laced coat, ſhe believed that he had obtained a commiſſion. So weak and abſurd is human vanity, that this miſtake of Amelia's poſſibly put poor Atkinſon out of countenance; for he looked at this inſtant more ſilly than he had ever done in his life; and making her a moſt reſpectful bow, muttered ſomething about obligations, in a ſcarce articulate or intelligible manner.

The ſerjeant had, indeed, among many other qualities, that modeſty which a Latin author honours by the name of ingenuous: nature had given him this, notwithſtanding the meanneſs of his birth; and ſix years converſation in the army had not taken it away. To ſay the truth, he was a noble fellow; and Amelia, by

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ſuppoſing he had a commiſſion in the guards, had been guilty of no affront to that honourable body.

Booth had a real affection for Atkinſon, though in fact he knew not half his merit. He acquainted him with his lodgings, where he earneſtly deſired to ſee him.

Amelia, who was far from being recovered from the terrors into which the ſeeing her huſband engaged with the ſoldier had thrown her, deſired to go home; nor was ſhe well able to walk without ſome aſſiſtance. While ſhe ſupported herſelf therefore on her huſband's arm, ſhe told Atkinſon, ſhe ſhould be obliged to him, if he would take care of the children. He readily accepted the office; but, upon offering his hand to Miſs, ſhe refuſed, and burſt into tears. Upon which, the tender mother reſigned Booth to her children, and put herſelf under the ſerjeant's protection; who conducted her ſafe home, though ſhe often declared ſhe feared ſhe ſhould drop down by the way. The fear of which ſo affected the ſerjeant, (for beſides the honour which he himſelf had for the lady, he knew how tenderly his friend loved her) that he was unable to ſpeak; and had not his nerves been ſo ſtrongly braced that nothing could ſhake them, he had enough in his mind to have ſet him a trembling equally with the lady.

When they arrived at the lodgings, the miſtreſs of the houſe opened the door, who, ſeeing Amelia's condition, threw open the parlour, and begged her to walk in; upon which ſhe immediately flung herſelf into a chair; and all preſent thought ſhe would have fainted away—However ſhe eſcaped that miſery, and having drank a glaſs of water with a little white wine mixed in it, ſhe began, in a little time, to regain her complexion; and at length aſſured Booth that ſhe was perfectly recovered; but declared ſhe had never undergone ſo much, and earneſtly begged him never to be ſo raſh for the future. She then called her little boy, and gently chid him; ſaying, 'you muſt never do ſo 'more, Billy; you ſee what miſchief you might have 'brought upon your father; and what you have made 'me ſuffer.'—'La! mama,' ſaid the child, 'what 'harm did I do? I did not know that people might

not walk in the green fields in London. I am ſure if I did a fault, the man puniſhed me enough for it; for he pinched me almoſt through my ſlender arm.' He then bared his little arm, which was greatly diſcoloured by the injury it had received—Booth uttered a moſt dreadful execration at this ſight; and the ſerjeant, who was now preſent, did the like.

Atkinſon now returned to his guard, and went directly to the officer to acquaint him with the ſoldier's inhumanity; but he, who was about fifteen years of age, gave the ſerjeant a great curſe, and ſaid the ſoldier had done very well; for that idle boys ought to be corrected. This however did not ſatisfy poor Atkinſon, who the next day, as ſoon as the guard was relieved, beat the fellow moſt unmercifully, and told him he would remember him as long as he ſtayed in the regiment.

Thus ended this trifling adventure, which ſome readers will, perhaps, be pleaſed with ſeeing related at full length. None, I think, can fail drawing one obſervation from it; namely, how capable the moſt inſignificant accident is of diſturbing human happineſs, and of producing the moſt unexpected and dreadful events. A reflection which may ſerve to many moral and religious uſes.

This accident produced the firſt acquaintance between the miſtreſs of the houſe, and her lodgers; for hitherto they had ſcarce exchanged a word together. But the great concern which the good woman had ſhown on Amelia's account at this time, was not likely to paſs unobſerved, or unthanked either by the huſband or wife. Amelia, therefore, as ſoon as ſhe was able to go up ſtairs, invited Mrs. Elliſon (for that was her name) to her apartment, and deſired the favour of her to ſtay to ſupper. She readily complied; and they paſſed a very agreeable evening together, in which the two women ſeemed to have conceived a moſt extraordinary liking to each other.

Though beauty in general doth not greatly recommend one woman to another, as it is too apt to create envy; yet, in caſes where this paſſion doth not interfere, a fine woman is often a pleaſing object even to

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ſome of her own ſex; eſpecially when her beauty is attended with a certain air of affability, as was that of Amelia in the higheſt degree. She was, indeed, a moſt charming woman; and I know not whether the little ſcar on her noſe did not rather add to, than diminiſh her beauty.

Mrs. Elliſon, therefore, was as much charmed with the lovelineſs of her fair lodger, as with all her other engaging qualities. She was, indeed, ſo taken with Amelia's beauty, that ſhe could not refrain from crying out in a kind of tranſport of admiration, 'Upon 'my word, Captain Booth, you are the happieſt man 'in the world. Your lady is ſo extremely handſome, 'that one cannot look at her without pleaſure.'

This good woman herſelf had none of theſe attractive charms to the eye. Her perſon was ſhort, and immoderately fat; her features were none of the moſt regular; and her complexion (if indeed ſhe ever had a good one) had conſiderably ſuffered by time.

Her good humour and complaiſance, however, were highly pleaſing to Amelia. Nay, why ſhould we conceal the ſecret ſatisfaction which that lady felt from the compliments paid to her perſon? ſince ſuch of my readers as like her beſt will not be ſorry to find that ſhe was a woman.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing various matters.

A Fortnight had now paſſed, ſince Booth had ſeen or heard from the colonel; which did not a little ſurpriſe him, as they had parted ſo good friends, and as he had ſo cordially undertaken his cauſe concerning the memorial, on which all his hopes depended.

The uneaſineſs which this gave him, farther encreaſed on finding that his friend refuſed to ſee him: for he had paid the colonel a viſit at nine in the morning, and was told he was not ſtirring; and at his return back an hour afterwards, the ſervant ſaid his maſter was gone out; of which Booth was certain of the falſe*hood: for* he had, during that whole hour, walked

backwards and forwards within ſight of the colonel's door, and muſt have ſeen him, if he had gone out within that time.

The good colonel, however, did not long ſuffer his friend to continue in the deplorable ſtate of anxiety; for the very next morning Booth received his memorial encloſed in a letter, acquainting him that Mr. James had mentioned his affair to the perſon he propoſed; but the great man had ſo many engagements on his hands, that it was impoſſible for him to make any further promiſes at this time.

The cold and diſtant ſtile of this letter, and indeed the whole behaviour of James, ſo different from what it had been formerly, had ſomething ſo myſterious in it, that it greatly puzzled and perplexed poor Booth; and it was ſo long before he was able to ſolve it, that the reader's curioſity will, perhaps, be obliged to us for not leaving him ſo long in the dark as to this matter. The true reaſon then of the colonel's conduct was this: his unbounded generoſity, together with the unbounded extravagance, and conſequently the great neceſſity of Miſs Matthews, had at length overcome the cruelty of that lady, with whom he likewiſe had luckily no rival. Above all, the deſire of being revenged on Booth, with whom ſhe was to the higheſt degree enraged, had perhaps contributed not a little to his ſucceſs: for ſhe had no ſooner condeſcended to a familiarity with her new lover, and diſcovered that Captain James, of whom ſhe had heard ſo much from Booth, was no other than the identical colonel, than ſhe employed every art of which ſhe was miſtreſs to make an utter breach of friendſhip between theſe two. For this purpoſe ſhe did not ſcruple to inſinuate, that the colonel was not at all obliged to the character given of him by his friend; and to the account of this latter ſhe placed moſt of the cruelty which ſhe had ſhown to the former.

Had the colonel made a proper uſe of his reaſon, and fairly examined the probability of the fact, he could ſcarce have been impoſed upon to believe a matter ſo inconſiſtent with all he knew of Booth, and in which that gentleman muſt have ſinned againſt all the

laws of honour without any visible temptation. But in solemn fact, the colonel was so intoxicated with his love, that it was in the power of his mistress to have persuaded him of any thing; besides, he had an interest in giving her credit: for he was not a little pleased with finding a reason for hating the man, whom he could not help hating without any reason, at least, without any which he durst fairly assign even to himself. Henceforth, therefore, he abandoned all friendship for Booth, and was more inclined to put him out of the world, than to endeavour any longer at supporting him in it.

Booth communicated this letter to his wife, who endeavoured, as usual, to the utmost of her power, to console him under one of the greatest afflictions, which, I think, can befal a man, namely, the unkindness of a friend; but he had luckily at the same time the greatest blessing in his possession, the kindness of a faithful and beloved wife. A blessing, however, which, though it compensates most of the evils of life, rather serves to aggravate the misfortune of distressed circumstances, from the consideration of the share which she is to bear in them.

This afternoon Amelia received a second visit from Mrs. Ellison, who acquainted her, that she had a present of a ticket for the oratorio, which would carry two persons into the gallery; and therefore begged the favour of her company thither.

Amelia with many thanks acknowledged the civility of Mrs Ellison; but declined accepting her offer; upon which, Booth very strenuously insisted on her going, and said to her—'My dear, if you knew the 'satisfaction I have in any of your pleasures, I am 'convinced you would not refuse the favour Mrs. Elli-'son is so kind to offer you; for as you are a lover of 'musick, you, who have never been at an oratorio, 'cannot conceive how you will be delighted.'—'I well 'know your goodness, my dear,' answered Amelia, 'but I cannot think of leaving my children without 'some person more proper to take care of them than 'this poor girl.'—Mrs. Ellison removed this objection, by offering her own servant, a very discreet matron,

tron, to attend them; but notwithſtanding this, and all ſhe could ſay, with the aſſiſtance of Booth, and of the children themſelves, Amelia ſtill perſiſted in her refuſal; and the miſtreſs of the houſe, who knew how far good breeding allows perſons to be preſſing on theſe occaſions, took her leave.

She was no ſooner departed, than Amelia, looking tenderly on her huſband, ſaid—'How can you, my 'dear creature, think that muſic hath any charms for 'me at this time—Or indeed do you believe that I am 'capable of any ſenſation worthy the name of plea-'ſure, when neither you nor my children are preſent, 'or bear any part of it?'

An officer of the regiment to which Booth had formerly belonged, hearing from Atkinſon where he lodged, now came to pay him a viſit. He told him that ſeveral of their old acquaintance were to meet the next Wedneſday at a tavern, and very ſtrongly preſſed him to be one of the company. Booth was, in truth, what is called a hearty fellow, and loved now and then to take a chearful glaſs with his friends; but he excuſed himſelf at this time. His friend declared he would take no denial, and he growing very importunate, Amelia at length ſeconded him. Upon this Booth anſwered—'Well, my dear, ſince you deſire 'me, I will comply, but on one condition, that you 'go at the ſame time to the oratorio.' Amelia thought this requeſt reaſonable enough, and gave her conſent; of which Mrs. Elliſon preſently received the news, and with great ſatisfaction.

It may, perhaps, be aſked why Booth could go to the tavern and not to the oratorio with his wife. In truth then, the tavern was within hallowed ground, that is to ſay, in the verge of the court; for of five officers that were to meet there, three, beſides Booth, were confined to that air, which hath been always found extremely wholeſome to a broken military conſtitution. And here, if the good reader will pardon the pun, he will ſcarce be offended at the obſervation; ſince, how is it poſſible that, without running in debt, any perſons ſhould maintain the dreſs and appearance of a gentleman, whoſe income is not half ſo good as

that of a porter? It is true, that this allowance, ſmall as it is, is a great expence to the public; but if ſeveral more unneceſſary charges were ſpared, the public might, perhaps, bear a little increaſe of this without much feeling it. They would not, I am ſure, have equal reaſon to complain at contributing to the maintenance of a ſet of brave fellows, who, at the hazard of their health, their limbs, and their lives, have maintained the ſafety and honour of their country; as when they find themſelves taxed to the ſupport of a ſet of drones, who have not the leaſt merit or claim to their favour; and who, without contributing in any manner to the good of the hive, live luxuriouſly on the labours of the induſtrious bee.

CHAP. IX.

In which Amelia, *with her friend, goes to the Oratorio.*

NOTHING happened between the Monday and the Wedneſday worthy a place in this hiſtory. Upon the evening of the latter, the two ladies went to the oratorio, and were there time enough to get a firſt row in the gallery. Indeed, there was only one perſon in the houſe when they came: for Amelia's inclinations, when ſhe gave a looſe to them, were pretty eager for this diverſion, ſhe being a great lover of muſic, and particularly Mr. Handel's compoſitions. Mrs. Elliſon was, I ſuppoſe, a great lover likewiſe of muſick, for ſhe was the more impatient of the two; which was rather the more extraordinary, as theſe entertainments were not ſuch novelties to her as they were to poor Amelia.

Though our ladies arrived full two hours before they ſaw the back of Mr. Handel; yet this time of expectation did not hang extremely heavy on their hands; for beſides their own chat, they had the company of a gentleman, whom they found at their firſt arrival in the gallery; and who, though plainly, or rather roughly dreſſed, very luckily for the women happened to be not only well-bred, but a perſon of very lively converſation. The gentleman on his part ſeemed *highly* charmed with Amelia, and in fact was ſo:

for, though he reſtrained himſelf entirely within the rules of good-breeding, yet was he in the higheſt degree officious to catch at every opportunity of ſhowing his reſpect, and doing her little ſervices. He procured her a book and wax-candle, and held the candle for her himſelf during the whole entertainment.

At the end of the oratorio, he declared he would not leave the ladies till he had ſeen them ſafe into their chairs or coach; and at the ſame time very earneſtly entreated that he might have the honour of waiting on them. Upon which Mrs. Elliſon, who was a very good-humoured woman, anſwered—'Ay, Sir, ſure, if 'you please; you have been very obliging to us; and 'a diſh of tea ſhall be at your ſervice at any time; 'and then told him where ſhe lived.'

The ladies were no ſooner ſeated in their hackney-coach, than Mrs. Elliſon burſt into a loud laughter, and cried—'I'll be hanged, madam, if you have not 'made a conqueſt to night; and what is very plea-'ſant, I believe the poor gentleman takes you for a 'ſingle lady.'—'Nay,' anſwered Amelia very gravely, 'I proteſt I began to think at laſt he was rather 'too particular, though he did not venture at a word 'that I could be offended at; but if you fancy any 'ſuch thing, I am ſorry you invited him to drink tea.' 'Why ſo?' replied Mrs. Elliſon, 'Are you angry 'with a man for liking you? if you are, you will be 'angry with almoſt every man that ſees you. If I 'was a man myſelf, I declare I ſhould be in the num-'ber of your admirers. Poor gentleman, I pity him 'heartily; he little knows that you have not a heart 'to diſpoſe of. For my own part, I ſhould not be 'ſurprized at ſeeing a ſerious propoſal of marriage: 'for I am convinced he is a man of fortune, not only by the politeneſs of his addreſs, but by the fineneſs of his linen, and that valuable diamond ring on 'his finger. But you will ſee more of him when he 'comes to tea.'—'Indeed I ſhall not,' anſwered Amelia, 'though I believe you only rally me: I hope you 'have a better opinion of me, than to think I would 'go willingly into the company of a man, who had 'an improper liking for me.' Mrs. Elliſon, who was

one of the gayeſt women in the world, repeated the words, improper liking, with a laugh; and cried, 'My dear Mrs. Booth, believe me, you are too handſome and too good-humoured for a prude. How can you affect being offended at what I am convinced is the greateſt pleaſure of womankind, and chiefly I believe of us virtuous women? for, I aſſure you, notwithſtanding my gaiety, I am as virtuous as any prude in Europe.'—'Far be it from me, madam,' ſaid Amelia, 'to ſuſpect the contrary of abundance of women, who indulge themſelves in much greater freedoms than I ſhould take, or have any pleaſure in taking: for I ſolemnly proteſt, if I know my own heart, the liking of all men, but of one, is a matter quite indifferent to me, or rather would be highly diſagreeable.'

This diſcourſe brought them home, where Amelia finding her children aſleep, and her huſband not returned, invited her companion to partake of her homely fare, and down they ſat to ſupper together. The clock ſtruck twelve; and no news being arrived of Booth, Mrs. Elliſon began to expreſs ſome aſtoniſhment at his ſtay, whence ſhe launched into a general reflection on huſbands, and ſoon paſſed to ſome particular invectives on her own. 'Ah, my dear madam,' ſays ſhe, 'I know the preſent ſtate of your mind by what I have myſelf often felt formerly. I am no ſtranger to the melancholy tone of a midnight clock. It was my misfortune to drag on a heavy chain above fifteen years, with a ſottiſh yoke-fellow. But how can I wonder at my fate; ſince I ſee even your ſuperior charms cannot confine a huſband from the bewitching pleaſures of a bottle.'—'Indeed, madam,' ſays Amelia, 'I have no reaſon to complain. Mr. Booth is one of the ſobereſt of men; but now and then to ſpend a late hour with his friend, is, I think, highly excuſable.'—'O, no doubt,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'if he can excuſe himſelf; but if I was a man.'—Here Booth came in and interrupted the diſcourſe. Amelia's eyes flaſhed with joy the moment he appeared; and he diſcovered no leſs pleaſure in ſeeing her. His ſpirits were indeed a little elevated with wine, ſo as to heighten

heighten his good-humour, without in the leaſt diſordering his underſtanding, and made him ſuch delightful company, that though it was paſt one in the morning, neither his wife, nor Mrs. Elliſon, thought of their beds during a whole hour.

Early the next morning the ſerjeant came to Mr. Booth's lodgings, and with a melancholy countenance acquainted him, that he had been the night before at an ale-houſe, where he heard one Mr. Murphy an attorney declare, that he would get a warrant backed againſt one Captain Booth at the next board of green-cloth. 'I hope, ſir,' ſaid he, 'your honour will 'pardon me; but, by what he ſaid, I was afraid he 'meant your honour; and therefore I thought it my 'duty to tell you; for I knew the ſame thing hap-'pen to a gentleman here the other day.'

Booth gave Mr. Atkinſon many thanks for his information. 'I doubt not,' ſaid he, 'but I am the 'perſon meant; for it would be fooliſh in me to deny 'that I am liable to apprehenſions of that ſort.'—'I 'hope, ſir,' ſaid the ſerjeant, 'your honour will ſoon 'have reaſon to fear no man living; but in the mean 'time, if any accident ſhould happen, my bail is at 'your ſervice as far as it will go: and I am a houſe-'keeper, and can ſwear myſelf worth one hundred 'pound.' Which hearty and friendly declaration received all thoſe acknowledgements from Booth which it really deſerved.

The poor gentleman was greatly alarmed at this news; but he was altogether as much ſurprized at Murphy's being the attorney employed againſt him, as all his debts, except only to Captain James, aroſe in the country, where he did not know that Mr. Murphy had any acquaintance. However, he made no doubt that he was the perſon intended, and reſolved to remain a cloſe priſoner in his own lodgings, till he ſaw the event of a propoſal which had been made him the evening before at the tavern, where an honeſt gentleman, who had a poſt under the government, and who was one of the company, had promiſed to ſerve him with the Secretary at War, telling him, that he made no doubt of procuring him whole pay in a regiment

abroad, which in his present circumstances was very highly worth his acceptance; when indeed that, and a gaol, seemed to be the only alternatives that offered themselves to his choice.

Mr. Booth and his lady spent that afternoon with Mrs. Ellison. An incident which we should scarce have mentioned, had it not been that Amelia gave, on this occasion, an instance of that prudence which should never be off its guard in married women of delicacy; for before she would consent to drink tea with Mrs. Ellison, she made conditions, that the gentleman who had met them at the oratorio should not be let in. Indeed this circumspection proved unnecessary in the present instance; for no such visitor ever came; a circumstance which gave great content to Amelia: for that lady had been a little uneasy at the railleries of Mrs. Ellison, and had upon reflection magnified every little compliment made her, and every little civility shown her by the unknown gentleman, far beyond the truth. These imaginations now all subsided again; and she imputed all that Mrs. Ellison had said, either to raillery or mistake.

A young lady made a fourth with them at whist, and likewise stayed the whole evening. Her name was Bennet. She was about the age of five and twenty; but sickness had given her an older look, and had a good deal diminished her beauty; of which, young as she was, she plainly appeared to have only the remains in her present possession. She was in one particular the very reverse of Mrs. Ellison, being altogether as remarkably grave as the other was gay. This gravity was not however attended with any sourness of temper: on the contrary, she had much sweetness in her countenance, and was perfectly well bred. In short, Amelia imputed her grave deportment to her ill health, and began to entertain a compassion for her, which in good minds, that is to say, in minds capable of compassion, is certain to introduce some little degree of love or friendship.

Amelia was in short so pleased with the conversation of this lady, that, though a woman of no impertinent curiosity, she could not help taking the first opportunity

portunity of enquiring who she was. Mrs. Ellison said, that she was an unhappy lady, who had married a young clergyman for love, who, dying of a consumption, had left her a widow in very indifferent circumstances. This account made Amelia still pity her more, and consequently added to the liking which she had already conceived for her. Amelia therefore desired Mrs. Ellison to bring her acquainted with Mrs. Bennet, and said she would go any day with her to make that lady a visit. 'There need be no 'ceremony,' cried Mrs. Ellison, 'she is a woman of 'no form: and as I saw plainly she was extremely 'pleased with Mrs. Booth, I am convinced I can 'bring her to drink tea with you any afternoon you 'please.'

The two next days Booth continued at home, highly to the satisfaction of his Amelia, who really knew no happiness out of his company, nor scarce any misery in it. She had, indeed, at all times so much of his company when in his power, that she had no occasion to assign any particular reason for his staying with her, and consequently it could give her no cause of suspicion. The Saturday one of her children was a little disordered with a feverish complaint which confined her to her room, and prevented her drinking tea in the afternoon with her husband in Mrs. Ellison's apartment, where a noble lord, a cousin of Mrs. Ellison's, happened to be present: for though that lady was reduced in her circumstances, and obliged to let out part of her house in lodgings, she was born of a good family, and had some considerable relations.

His lordship was not himself in any office of state; but his fortune gave him great authority with those who were. Mrs. Ellison, therefore, very bluntly took an opportunity of recommending Booth to his consideration. She took the first hint from my lord's calling the gentleman captain.—To which she answered—'Ay, I wish your lordship would make him so. 'It would be but an act of justice, and I know it is 'in your power to do much greater things.' She then mentioned Booth's services, and the wounds he

had received at the ſiege, of which ſhe had heard a faithful account from Amelia – Booth bluſhed and was as ſilent as a young virgin at the hearing her own praiſes. His lordſhip anſwered, 'Couſin Elliſon, you 'know you may command my intereſt; nay, I ſhall 'have a pleaſure in ſerving one of Mr. Booth's cha-'racter; for my part, I think merit in all capacities 'ought to be encouraged; but I know the miniſtry 'are greatly peſtered with ſollicitations at this time. 'However, Mr. Booth may be aſſured I will take the 'firſt opportunity; and, in the mean time, I ſhall 'be glad of ſeeing him any morning he pleaſes.' For all theſe declarations, Booth was not wanting in acknowledgments to the generous peer, any more than he was in ſecret gratitude to the lady, who had ſhown ſo friendly and uncommon a zeal in his favour.

The reader, when he knows the character of this nobleman, may, perhaps, conclude that his ſeeing Booth alone was a lucky circumſtance; for he was ſo paſſionate an admirer of women, that he could ſcarce have eſcaped the attraction of Amelia's beauty. And few men, as I have obſerved, have ſuch diſintereſted generoſity as to ſerve a huſband the better, becauſe they are in love with his wife, unleſs ſhe will condeſcend to pay a price beyond the reach of a virtuous woman.

AMELIA.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

In which the reader will meet with an old acquaintance.

BOOTH'S affairs were put on a better aſpect than they had ever worn before, and he was willing to make uſe of the opportunity of one day in ſeven to taſte the freſh air.

At nine in the morning he went to pay a viſit to his old friend Colonel James, reſolving, if poſſible, to have a full explanation of that behaviour which appeared to him ſo myſterious; but the colonel was as inacceſſible as the beſt defended fortreſs; and it was as impoſſible for Booth to paſs beyond his entry, as the Spaniards found it to take Gibraltar. He received the uſual anſwers; firſt, that the colonel was not ſtirring, and an hour after that he was gone out. All that he got by aſking further queſtions was only to receive ſtill ruder and ruder anſwers; by which, if he had been very ſagacious, he might have been ſatisfied how little worth his while it was to deſire to go in; for the porter at a great man's door is a kind of thermometer, by which you may diſcover the warmth or coldneſs of his maſter's friendſhip. Nay, in the higheſt ſtations of all, as the great man himſelf hath his different kinds of ſalutation, from an hearty embrace with a kiſs, and my dear lord, or dear Sir Charles, down to, well Mr.——what would you have me do? ſo the porter, to ſome bows with reſpect, to others with a ſmile, to ſome he bows more, to others leſs low, to others not at-all. Some he juſt lets in, and

others he juſt ſhuts out. And in all this they ſo well correſpond, that one would be inclined to think that the great man and his porter had compared their liſts together, and like two actors concerned to act different parts in the ſame ſcene, had rehearſed their parts privately together before they ventured to perform in public.

Though Booth did not, perhaps, ſee the whole matter in this juſt light, for that in reality it is; yet he was diſcerning enough to conclude from the behaviour of the ſervant, eſpecially when he conſidered that of the maſter likewiſe, that he had entirely loſt the friendſhip of James; and this conviction gave him a concern, that not only the flattering proſpect of his lordſhip's favour was not able to compenſate; but which even obliterated, and made him for a while forget the ſituation in which he had left his Amelia; and he wandered about almoſt two hours, ſcarce knowing where he went, till at laſt he dropped into a coffee-houſe near St. James's, where he ſat himſelf down.

He had ſcarce drank his diſh of coffee, before he heard a young officer of the guards cry to another, 'Od, d—mn me, Jack, here he comes—here's old honour and dignity faith.' Upon which, he ſaw a chair open, and out iſſued a moſt erect and ſtately figure indeed, with a vaſt perriwig on his head, and a vaſt hat under his arm. This auguſt perſonage, having entered the room, walked directly up to the upper end, where having paid his reſpects to all preſent of any note, to each according to ſeniority, he at laſt caſt his eyes on Booth, and very civilly, though ſomewhat coldly, aſked him how he did.

Booth, who had long recognized the features of his old acquaintance Major Bath, returned the compliment with a very low bow; but did not venture to make the firſt advance to familiarity, as he was truly poſſeſſed of that quality which the Greeks conſidered in the higheſt light of honour, and which we term modeſty; though, indeed, neither our's nor the Latin language hath any word adequate to the idea of the original.

The

The colonel, after having discharged himself of two or three articles of news, and made his comments upon them, when the next chair to him became vacant, called upon Booth to fill it. He then asked him several questions relating to his affairs; and, when he heard he was out of the army, advised him earnestly to use all means to get in again, saying, that he was a pretty lad, and they must not lose him.

Booth told him in a whisper, that he had a great deal to say to him on that subject, if they were in a more private place; upon this, the colonel proposed a walk in the Park, which the other readily accepted.

During their walk, Booth opened his heart, and among other matters acquainted Colonel Bath, that he feared he had lost the friendship of Colonel James; 'though I am not,' said he, 'conscious of having 'done the least thing to deserve it.'

Bath answered, 'You are certainly mistaken, Mr. 'Booth. I have indeed scarce seen my brother since 'my coming to town; for I have been here but 'two days; however, I am convinced he is a man 'of too nice honour to do any thing inconsistent 'with the true dignity of a gentleman.' Booth answered, 'he was far from accusing him of any thing 'dishonourable.'—'D—mn me,' said Bath, 'if there 'is a man alive can or dare accuse him: if you have 'the least reason to take any thing ill, why don't you 'go to him? you are a gentleman, and his rank doth 'not protect him from giving you satisfaction.'—'The 'affair is not of any such kind,' says Booth, 'I have 'great obligations to the colonel, and have more 'reason to lament than complain; and if I could but 'see him, I am convinced I should have no cause for 'either; but I cannot get within his house; it was 'but an hour ago, a servant of his turned me rudely 'from the door.'—'Did a servant of my brother use 'you rudely?' said the colonel with the utmost gravity. 'I do not know, sir, in what light you see such 'things; but to me, the affront of a servant is the 'affront of the master; and if he doth not immediately 'punish it, by all the dignity of a man, I would see 'the master's nose between my fingers.' Booth offered

fered to explain, but to no purpoſe; the colonel was got into his ſtilts; and it was impoſſible to take him down, nay, it was as much as Booth could poſſibly do to part with him without an actual quarrel; nor would he, perhaps, have been able to have accompliſhed it, had not the colonel by accident turned at laſt to take Booth's ſide of the queſtion; and before they ſeparated, he ſwore many oaths that James ſhould give him proper ſatisfaction.

Such was the end of this preſent interview, ſo little to the content of Booth, that he was heartily concerned he had ever mentioned a ſyllable of the matter to his honourable friend.

CHAP II.

In which Booth *pays a viſit to the noble lord.*

WHEN that day of the week returned, in which Mr. Booth choſe to walk abroad, he went to wait on the noble peer according to his kind invitation.

Booth now found a very different reception with this great man's porter, from what he had met with at his friend the colonel's. He no ſooner told his name, than the porter with a bow told him his lordſhip was at home; the door immediately flew wide open; and he was conducted to an antechamber, where a ſervant told him he would acquaint his lordſhip with his arrival. Nor did he wait many minutes before the ſame ſervant returned, and uſhered him to his lordſhip's apartment.

He found my lord alone, and was received by him in the moſt courteous manner imaginable. After the firſt ceremonials were over his lordſhip began in the following words: 'Mr. Booth, I do aſſure you, you 'are very much obliged to my Couſin Elliſon. 'She hath given you ſuch a character, that I ſhall 'have a pleaſure in doing any thing in my power to 'ſerve you.—But it will be very difficult, I am afraid, 'to get you a rank at home. In the Weſt-Indies, 'perhaps, or in ſome regiment abroad, it may be 'more eaſy; and when I conſider your reputation as

'a ſoldier,

'a ſoldier, I make no doubt of your readineſs to go 'to any place where the ſervice of your country ſhall 'call you.' Booth anſwered, 'that he was highly 'obliged to his lordſhip, and aſſured him, he would 'with great chearfulneſs attend his duty in any part 'of the world. The only thing grievous in the ex-'change of countries,' ſaid he, 'in my opinion, is to 'leave thoſe I love behind me, and I am ſure, I ſhall 'never have a ſecond trial equal to my firſt. It was 'very hard, my lord, to leave a young wife big with 'her firſt child, and ſo affected with my abſence, that 'I had the utmoſt reaſon to deſpair of ever ſeeing 'her more. After ſuch a demonſtration of my reſo-'lution to ſacrifice every other conſideration to my 'duty, I hope your lordſhip will honour me with 'ſome confidence, that I ſhall make no objection to 'ſerve in any country.'—'My dear Mr. Booth,' anſwered the lord, 'you ſpeak like a ſoldier, and I 'greatly honour your ſentiments. Indeed, I own 'the juſtice of your inference from the example you 'have given: for, to quit a wife as you ſay, in the 'very infancy of marriage, is, I acknowledge, ſome 'trial of reſolution.' Booth anſwered with a low bow, and then after ſome immaterial converſation, his lordſhip promiſed to ſpeak immediately to the miniſter, and appointed Mr. Booth to come to him again on the Wedneſday morning, that he might be acquainted with his patron's ſucceſs. The poor man now bluſhed and looked ſilly, till, after ſome time, he ſummoned up all his courage to his aſſiſtance, and relying on the other's friendſhip, he opened the whole affair of his circumſtances, and confeſſed that he did not dare to ſtir from his lodgings above one day in ſeven. His lordſhip expreſſed great concern at this account, and very kindly promiſed to take ſome opportunity of calling on him at his Couſin Elliſon's, when he hoped, he ſaid, to bring him comfortable tidings.

Booth ſoon afterwards took his leave with the moſt profuſe acknowledgments for ſo much goodneſs, and haſtened home to acquaint his Amelia with what had ſo greatly overjoyed him. She highly congratulated him on his having found ſo generous and powerful a

friend, towards whom both their boſoms burnt with the warmeſt ſentiments of gratitude. She was not, however, contented, till ſhe had made Booth renew his promiſe in the moſt ſolemn manner of taking her with him. After which, they ſat down with their little children to a ſcrag of mutton and broth, with the higheſt ſatisfaction, and very heartily drank his lordſhip's health in a pot of porter.

In the afternoon this happy couple, if the reader will allow me to call poor people happy, drank tea with Mrs. Elliſon, where his lordſhip's praiſes being again repeated by both the huſband and wife, were very loudly echoed by Mrs. Elliſon. While they were here, the young lady, whom we have mentioned at the end of the laſt book to have made a fourth at whiſt, and with whom Amelia ſeemed ſo much pleaſed, came in; ſhe was juſt returned to town from a ſhort viſit in the country, and her preſent viſit was unexpected. It was, however, very agreeable to Amelia, who liked her ſtill better upon a ſecond interview, and was reſolved to ſollicit her further acquaintance.

Mrs. Bennet ſtill maintained ſome little reſerve, but was much more familiar and communicative than before. She appeared moreover to be as little ceremonious as Mrs. Elliſon had reported her, and very readily accepted Amelia's apology for not paying her the firſt viſit, and agreed to drink tea with her the very next afternoon.

Whilſt the above-mentioned company were ſitting in Mrs. Elliſon's parlour, Serjeant Atkinſon paſſed by the window, and knocked at the door. Mrs. Elliſon no ſooner ſaw him, than ſhe ſaid, 'Pray, Mr. Booth, 'who is that genteel young ſerjeant? he was here 'every day laſt week, to enquire after you.' This was indeed a fact; the ſerjeant was apprehenſive of the deſign of Murphy; but as the poor fellow had received all his anſwers from the maid or Mrs. Elliſon, Booth had never heard a word of the matter. He was however greatly pleaſed with what he was now told, and burſt forth into great praiſes of the ſerjeant, which were ſeconded by Amelia, who added, that he

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was her foster-brother, and she believed one of the honestest fellows in the world.

'And I'll swear,' cries Mrs. Ellison, 'he is one 'of the prettiest—Do, Mr. Booth, desire him to walk 'in. A serjeant of the guards is a gentleman; and 'I had rather give such a man as you describe a dish 'of tea, than any beau fribble of them all.'

Booth wanted no great sollicitation to show any kind of regard to Atkinson; and, accordingly, the serjeant was ushered in, though not without some reluctance on his side. There is, perhaps, nothing more uneasy than those sensations which the French call the *mauvaise honte*, nor any more difficult to conquer; and poor Atkinson would, I am persuaded, have mounted a breach with less concern, than he showed in walking across a room before three ladies, two of whom were his avowed well-wishers.

Though I do not entirely agree with the late learned Mr. Essex, the celebrated dancing master's opinion, that dancing is the rudiment of polite education, as he would, I apprehend, exclude very other art and science; yet it is certain, that persons whose feet have never been under the hands of the professors of that art, are apt to discover this want in their education in every motion, nay, even when they stand or sit still. They seem, indeed, to be overburthened with limbs, which they know not how to use, as if, when nature hath finished her work, the dancing-master still is necessary to put it in motion.

Atkinson was at present an example of this observation, which doth so much honour to a profession for which I have a very high regard. He was handsome and exquisitely well made; and yet as he had never learned to dance, he made so awkward an appearance in Mrs. Ellison's parlour, that the good lady herself, who had invited him in, could at first scarce refrain from laughter at his behaviour.

He had not, however, been long in the room, before admiration of his person got the better of such visible ideas. So great is the advantage of beauty in men as well as women, and so sure is this quality

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in either ſex of procuring ſome regard from the beholder.

The exceeding courteous behaviour of Mrs. Elliſon, joined to that of Amelia and Booth, at length diſſipated the uneaſineſs of Atkinſon; and he gained ſufficient confidence to tell the company ſome entertaining ſtories of accidents that had happened in the army within his knowledge: which, though they greatly pleaſed all preſent, are not, however, of conſequence enough to have a place in this hiſtory.

Mrs. Elliſon was ſo very importunate with her company to ſtay ſupper, that they all conſented. As for the ſerjeant, he ſeemed to be none of the leaſt welcome gueſts. She was, indeed, ſo pleaſed with what ſhe had heard of him, and what ſhe ſaw of him, that when a little warmed with wine, for ſhe was no flincher at the bottle, ſhe began to indulge ſome freedoms in her diſcourſe towards him, that a little offended Amelia's delicacy, nay, they did not ſeem to be highly reliſhed by the other lady; though I am far from inſinuating that theſe exceeded the bounds of decorum, or were, indeed, greater liberties than ladies of the middle age, and eſpecially widows, do frequently allow to themſelves.

CHAP. III.

Relating principally to the affairs of Serjeant Atkinſon.

THE next day, when all the ſame company, Atkinſon only excepted, aſſembled in Amelia's apartment, Mrs. Elliſon preſently began to diſcourſe of him, and that in terms not only of approbation, but even of affection. She called him her clever ſerjeant, and her dear ſearjeant, repeated often that he was the prettieſt fellow in the army, and ſaid it was a thouſand pities he had not a commiſſion; for that, if he had, ſhe was ſure he would become a general.

'I am of your opinion, madam,' anſwered Booth; 'and he hath got one hundred pounds of his own already; if he could find a wife now to help him to 'two or three hundred more, I think he might eaſily

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'get a commiſſion in a marching regiment; for I am 'convinced there is no colonel in the army would 'refuſe him.'

'Refuſe him indeed!' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon; 'no. 'He would be a very pretty colonel that did. And 'upon my honour, I believe there are very few ladies 'who would refuſe him, if he had but a proper op-'portunity of ſolliciting them. The colonel and the 'lady both would be better off, than with one of 'thoſe pretty maſters that I ſee walking about, and 'dragging their long ſwords after them, when they 'ſhould rather drag their leading-ſtrings.'

'Well ſaid,' cries Booth, 'and ſpoken like a wo-'man of ſpirit.—Indeed, I believe they would be 'both better ſerved.'

'True captain,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon, 'I would 'rather leave the two firſt ſyllables out of the word 'gentleman, than the laſt.'

'Nay, I aſſure you,' replied Booth, 'there is not a 'quieter creature in the world. Though the fellow 'hath the bravery of a lion, he hath the meekneſs 'of a lamb. I can tell you ſtories enow of that 'kind, and ſo can my dear Amelia when he was a 'boy.'

'O, if the match ſticks there,' cries Amelia, 'I 'poſitively will not ſpoil his fortune by my ſilence. 'I can anſwer for him from his infancy, that he was 'one of the beſt natured lads in the world. I will 'tell you a ſtory or two of him, the truth of which 'I can teſtify from my own knowledge. When he 'was but ſix years old, he was at play with me 'at my mother's houſe, and a great pointing dog bit 'him through the leg. The poor lad, in the midſt 'of the anguiſh of his wound, declared he was over-'joyed it had not happened to Miſs (for the ſame 'dog had juſt before ſnapped at me, and my petticoats 'had been my defence.) Another inſtance of his 'goodneſs, which greatly recommended him to my 'father, and which I have loved him for ever ſince, 'was this: my father was a great lover of birds, and 'ſtrictly forbad the ſpoiling of their neſts. Poor Joe 'was one day caught upon a tree, and being con-

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'cluded guilty, was ſeverely laſhed for it; but it was 'afterwards diſcovered that another boy, a friend of 'Joe's, had robbed the neſt of its young ones, and 'poor Joe had climbed the tree in order to reſtore 'them, notwithſtanding which, he ſubmitted to the 'puniſhment rather than he would impeach his com-'panion. But if theſe ſtories appear childiſh and 'trifling, the duty and kindneſs he hath ſhown to 'his mother muſt recommend him to every one. 'Ever ſince he hath been fifteen years old, he hath 'more than half ſupported her; and when my bro-'ther died, I remember particularly Joe at his deſire, 'for he was much his favourite, had one of his ſuits 'given him, but inſtead of his becoming finer on 'that occaſion, another young fellow came to church 'in my brother's clothes, and my old nurſe ap-'peared the ſame Sunday in a new gown, which 'her ſon had purchaſed for her with the ſale of his 'legacy.'

'Well, I proteſt, he is a very worthy creature,' ſaid Mrs. Bennet.

'He is a charming fellow,' cries Mrs. Elliſon,—'but then the name of ſerjeant, Captain Booth, 'there, as the play ſays, my pride brings me off 'again.'

And whatſoever the ſages charge on pride,
The angels fall, and twenty other good faults beſide;
On earth I'm ſure—I'm ſure—ſomething—calling
Pride ſaves man, and our ſex too from falling.

Here a footman's rap at the door ſhook the room. Upon which Mrs. Elliſon, running to the window, cried out, let me die if it is not my lord, what ſhall I do? I muſt be at home to him, but ſuppoſe he ſhould enquire for you, captain, what ſhall I ſay? or will you go down with me?

The company were in ſome confuſion at this inſtant, and before they had agreed on any thing, Booth's little girl came running into the room, and ſaid, 'there was a prodigious great gentleman coming 'up ſtairs.' She was immediately followed by his lordſhip.

lordſhip, who, as he knew Booth muſt be at home, made very little or no enquiry at the door.

Amelia was taken ſomewhat at a ſurpriſe, but ſhe was too polite to ſhow much confuſion: for though ſhe knew nothing of the town, ſhe had had a genteel education, and kept the beſt company the country afforded. The ceremonies, therefore, paſt as uſual, and they all ſat down.

His lordſhip ſoon addreſſed himſelf to Booth, ſaying, 'As I have what I think good news for you, ſir, I 'could not delay giving myſelf the pleaſure of com- 'municating it to you. I have mentioned your affair 'where I promiſed you, and I have no doubt of my 'ſucceſs. One may eaſily perceive, you know, from 'the manner of people's behaving upon ſuch occa- 'ſions; and, indeed, when I related your caſe, I 'found there was much inclination to ſerve you. Great 'men, Mr. Booth, muſt do things in their own time; 'but I think you may depend on having ſomething 'done very ſoon.'

Booth made many acknowledgments for his lordſhip's goodneſs, and now a ſecond time paid all the thanks which would have been due, even had the favour been obtained. This art of promiſing, is the œconomy of a great man's pride, a ſort of good huſbandry in conferring favours, by which they receive ten fold in acknowledgements for every obligation, I mean among thoſe who really intend the ſervice: for there are others who cheat poor men of their thanks, without ever deſigning to deſerve them at all.

This matter being ſufficiently diſcuſſed, the converſation took a gayer turn; and my lord began to entertain the ladies with ſome of that elegant diſcourſe, which though moſt delightful to hear, it is impoſſible ſhould ever be read.

His lordſhip was ſo highly pleaſed with Amelia, that he could not help being ſomewhat particular to her; but his particularity diſtinguiſhed itſelf only in a higher degree of reſpect, and was ſo very polite, and ſo very diſtant, that ſhe herſelf was pleaſed, and at his departure, which was not till he had far exceeded

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the length of a common visit, declared he was the finest gentleman she had ever seen, with which sentiment her husband and Mrs. Ellison both entirely concurred.

Mrs. Bennet on the contrary, expressed some little dislike to my lord's complaisance, which she called excessive. 'For my own part,' said she, 'I have 'not the least relish for those very fine gentlemen: 'what the world generally calls politeness, I term in-'sincerity; and I am more charmed with the stories 'which Mrs. Booth told us of the honest serjeant, 'than with all that the finest gentlemen in the world 'ever said in their lives.'—

'O to be sure,' cries Mrs Ellison, '*All for love*, 'or *the world well lost*, is a motto very proper for 'some folks to wear in their coat of arms; but the 'generality of the world will, I believe, agree with 'that lady's opinion of my cousin, rather than with 'Mrs. Bennet.'

Mrs. Bennet, seeing Mrs. Ellison took offence at what she said, thought proper to make some apology, which was very readily accepted, and so ended the visit.

We cannot, however, put an end to the chapter without observing, that such is the ambitious temper of beauty, that it may always apply to itself that celebrated passage in Lucan.

Nec quenquam jam ferre potest Cæsarve priorem,
Pompeiusve parem.———

Indeed, I believe, it may be laid down as a general rule, that no woman who hath any great pretensions to admiration, is ever well pleased in a company, where she perceives herself to fill only the second place. This observation, however, I humbly submit to the judgment of the ladies, and hope it will be considered as retracted by me, if they shall dissent from my opinion.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Containing matters that require no preface.

WHEN Booth and his wife were left alone together, they both extremely exulted in their good fortune, in having found ſo good a friend as his lordſhip; nor were they wanting in very warm expreſſions of their gratitude towards Mrs. Elliſon. After which, they began to lay down ſchemes of living when Booth ſhould have his commiſſion of captain, and after the exacteſt computation, concluded, that with œconomy, they ſhould be able to ſave, at leaſt, fifty pounds a year out of their income, in order to pay their debts.

Theſe matters being well ſettled, Amelia aſked Booth what he thought of Mrs. Bennet. 'I think, 'my dear,' anſwered Booth, 'that ſhe hath been formerly a very pretty womam.'—'I am miſtaken,' replied ſhe, 'if ſhe be not a very good creature. I 'don't know I ever took ſuch a liking to any one 'on ſo ſhort an acquaintance. I fancy ſhe hath 'been a very ſprightly woman: for if you obſerve, ſhe 'diſcovers by ſtarts a great vivacity in her countenance.' 'I made the ſame obſervation,' cries Booth: 'ſure ſome ſtrange misfortune hath befallen her.'—A 'misfortune indeed!' anſwered Amelia. 'Sure, child, 'you forgot what Mrs. Elliſon told us, that ſhe had 'loſt a beloved huſband. A misfortune which I have 'often wondered at any woman's ſurviving'—at which words, ſhe caſt a tender look at Booth, and preſently afterwards throwing herſelf upon his neck cried—'O Heavens! what a happy creature am I? 'when I conſider the dangers you have gone through 'how I exult in my bliſs!' The good natured reader will ſuppoſe that Booth was not deficient in returning ſuch tenderneſs; after which, the converſation became too fond to be here related.

The next morning Mrs. Elliſon addreſſed herſelf to Booth as follows: 'I ſhall make no apology, Sir, for 'what I am going to ſay, as it proceeds from my friendſhip

'friendſhip to yourſelf and your dear lady. I am 'convinced then, Sir, there is ſomething more than 'accident in your going abroad only one day in the 'week. Now, Sir, if, as I am afraid, matters are 'not altogether as well as I wiſh them, I beg, ſince 'I do not believe you are provided with a lawyer, 'that you will ſuffer me to recommend one to you. 'The perſon I ſhall mention, is, I aſſure you, of 'much ability in his profeſſion, and I have known 'him do great ſervices to gentleman under a cloud. 'Do not be aſhamed of your circumſtances, my dear 'friend. They are a much greater ſcandal to thoſe, 'who have left ſo much merit unprovided for.'

Booth gave Mrs. Elliſon abundance of thanks for her kindneſs, and explicitly confeſſed to her that her conjectures were right, and without heſitation, accepted the offer of her friend's aſſiſtance.

Mrs. Elliſon then acquainted him with her apprehenſions on this account. She ſaid ſhe had both yeſterday and this morning ſeen two or three very ugly ſuſpicious fellows paſs ſeveral times by her window. 'Upon all accounts,' ſaid ſhe, 'my dear Sir, I ad'viſe you to keep yourſelf cloſe confined till the law'yer hath been with you. I am ſure he will get 'you your liberty, at leaſt of walking about within the 'verge—There's ſomething to be done with the board 'of green cloth, I don't know what; but this I 'know, that ſeveral gentlemen have lived here a long 'time very comfortably, and have defied all the ven'geance of their creditors. However, in the mean 'time, you muſt be a cloſe priſoner with your lady; 'and I believe there is no man in England but would 'exchange his liberty for the ſame gaol.'

She then departed, in order to ſend for the attorney, and preſently afterwards, the ſerjeant arrived with news of the like kind. He ſaid he had ſcraped an acquaintance with Murphy. 'I hope your honour 'will pardon me,' cries Atkinſon, 'but I pretended 'to have a ſmall demand upon your honour myſelf, 'and offered to employ him in the buſineſs. Upon 'which, he told me, that if I would go with him

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'to the Marſhal's Court, and make affidavit of my 'debt, he ſhould be able very ſhortly to get it me; 'for I ſhall have the captain in hold,' cries he, 'with-'in a day or two. I wiſh,' ſaid the ſerjeant, 'I could 'do your honour any ſervice. Shall I walk about all 'day before the door? or ſhall I be porter, and watch 'it in the inſide, till your honour can find ſome 'means of ſecuring yourſelf? I hope you will not be 'offended at me, but I beg you would take care of 'falling into Murphy's hands; for he hath the cha-'racter of the greateſt villain upon earth. I am afraid 'you will think me too bold, ſir; but I have a little 'money, if it can be of any ſervice, do, pray, your 'honour, command it. It can never do me ſo much 'good any other way. Conſider, ſir, I owe all I 'have to yourſelf, and my dear miſtreſs.

Booth ſtood a moment, as if he had been thunder-ſtruck, and then, the tears burſting from his eyes, he ſaid: 'Upon my ſoul, Atkinſon, you overcome me. 'I ſcarce ever heard of ſo much goodneſs, nor do I 'know how to expreſs my ſentiments of it. But be 'aſſured, as for your money, I will not accept it, and 'let it ſatisfy you, that in my preſent circumſtances 'it would do me no eſſential ſervice; but this be aſ-'ſured of likewiſe, that, whilſt I live, I ſhall never 'forget the kindneſs of the offer.——However, as I 'apprehend I may be in ſome danger of fellows get-'ting into the houſe, for a day or two, as I have no 'guard but a poor little girl, I will not refuſe the 'goodneſs you offer to ſhow in my protection. And 'I make no doubt but Mrs. Elliſon will let you ſit in 'her parlour for that purpoſe.'

Atkinſon with the utmoſt readineſs undertook the office of porter; and Mrs. Elliſon as readily allotted him a place in her back parlour, where he continued three days together, from eight in the morning till twelve at night; during which time, he had ſometimes the company of Mrs. Elliſon, and ſometimes of Booth, Amelia, and Mrs. Bennet too; for this laſt had taken as great a fancy to Amelia, as Amelia had to her; and therefore as Mr. Booth's affairs were now no ſecret in the neighbourhood, made her frequent viſits

during the confinement of her husband, and consequently her own.

Nothing, as I remember, happened in this interval of time more worthy notice than the following card, which Amelia received from her old acquaintance Mrs. James. 'Mrs. James sends her compliments to Mrs. Booth, and desires to know how she does; for as she hath not had the favour of seeing her at her own house, or of meeting her in any public place, in so long time, fears it may be owing to ill health.'

Amelia had long given over all thoughts of her friend, and doubted not but that she was as entirely given over by her; she was very much surprised at this message, and under some doubt whether it was not meant as an insult, especially from the mention of public places, which she thought so inconsistent with her present circumstances, of which she supposed Mrs. James was well apprised. However, at the entreaty of her husband, who languished for nothing more than to be again reconciled to his friend James, Amelia undertook to pay the lady a visit, and to examine into the mystery of this conduct, which appeared to her so unaccountable.

Mrs. James received her with a degree of civility that amazed Amelia, no less than her coldness had done before. She resolved to come to an eclaircissement, and having sat out some company that came in, when they were alone together, Amelia, after some silence, and many offers to speak, at last said, 'my dear Jenny (if you will now suffer me to call you by so familiar a name) have you entirely forgot a certain young lady who had the pleasure of being your intimate acquaintance at Montpellier?'——'Whom do you mean, dear madam?' cries Mrs. James, with great concern.—'I mean myself,' answered Amelia.—'You surprise me, madam,' replied Mrs. James. 'How can you ask me that question?'—'Nay, my dear, I do not intend to offend you,' cries Amelia; 'but I am really desirous to solve to myself the reason of that coldness which you showed me, *when* you did me the favour of a visit. Can you think

'think, my dear, I was not disappointed, when I ex-
'pected to meet an intimate friend, to receive a cold
'formal visitant? I desire you to examine your own
'heart, and answer me honestly, if you do not think
'I had some little reason to be dissatisfied with your
'behaviour?'—'Indeed, Mrs. Booth,' answered the other lady, 'you surprise me very much; if there was
'any thing displeasing to you in my behaviour, I am
'extremely concerned at it. I did not know I had
'been defective in any of the rules of civility, but if I
'was, madam, I ask your pardon.'—'Is civility then
'my dear,' replied Amelia, 'a synonymous term
'with friendship? could I have expected, when I parted
'the last time with Miss Jenny Bath, to have met her
'the next time in the shape of a fine lady, complain-
'ing of the hardship of climbing up two pair of stairs
'to visit me, and then approaching me with the distant
'air of a new or a slight acquaintance? Do you think,
'my dear Mrs. James, if the tables had been turned,
'if my fortune had been as high in the world as yours,
'and you in my distress and abject condition, that I
'would not have climbed as high as the Monument
'to visit you?'—'Sure madam,' cries Mrs. James,
'I mistake you, or you have greatly mistaken me.
'Can you complain of my not visiting you, who
'have owed me a visit almost these three weeks? Nay,
'did I not even then send you a card, which sure
'was doing more than all the friendship and good
'breeding in the world required; but, indeed, as I
'had met you in no public place, I really thought you
'was ill?'—'How can you mention public places to
'me,' said Amelia, 'when you can hardly be a
'stranger to my present situation? did you not know,
'madam, that I was ruined?'—'No, indeed, madam,
'did I not,' replied Mrs. James: 'I am sure I should
'have been highly concerned if I had.'—'Why, sure
'my dear,' cries Amelia, 'you could not imagine
'that we were in affluent circumstances, when you
'found us in such a place, and in such a condition.'—
'Nay, my dear,' answered Mrs. James, 'since you
'are pleased to mention it first yourself, I own, I was
'a little surprised to see you in no better lodgings; but I

'concluded you had your own reaſons for liking them; 'and for my own part, I have laid it down as a poſi- 'tive rule, never to enquire into the private affairs of 'any one, eſpecially of my friends. I am not of the 'humour of ſome ladies, who confine the circle of 'their acquaintance to one part of the town, and 'would not be known to viſit in the city for the 'world. For my part, I never dropped an acquaintance 'with any one, while it was reputable to keep it up; 'and I can ſolemnly declare, I have not a friend in 'the world for whom I have a greater eſteem than I 'have for Mrs. Booth.'

At this inſtant, the arrival of a new viſitant put an end to the diſcourſe, and Amelia ſoon after took her leave without the leaſt anger, but with ſome little unavoidable contempt for a lady, in whoſe opinion, as we have hinted before, outward form and ceremony conſtituted the whole eſſence of friendſhip; who valued all her acquaintance alike, as each individual ſerved equally to fill up a place in her viſiting roll, and who, in reality, had not the leaſt concern for the good qualities or well-being of any of them.

CHAP. V.

Containing much heroic matter.

AT the end of three days, Mrs. Elliſon's friend had ſo far purchaſed Mr. Booth's liberty, that he could walk again abroad within the verge, without any danger of having a warrant backed againſt him by the board before he had notice. As for the ill-looked perſons that had given the alarm, it was now diſcovered that another unhappy gentleman, and not Booth, was the object of their purſuit.

Mr. Booth being now delivered from his fears, went, as he had formerly done, to take his morning-walk in the Park. Here he met Colonel Bath in company with ſome other officers, and very civilly paid his reſpects to him. But inſtead of returning the ſalute, the colonel looked him full in the face with a very ſtern countenance; and, if he could be ſaid to take any notice

notice of him, it was in ſuch a manner as to inform him he would take no notice of him.

Booth was not more hurt than ſurpriſed at this behaviour, and reſolved to know the reaſon of it. He therefore watched an opportunity till the colonel was alone, and then walked boldly up to him, and deſired to know if he had given him any offence—the colonel anſwered haſtily, 'Sir, I am above being offended 'with you, nor do I think it conſiſtent with my dignity to make you any anſwer.' Booth replied, 'I don't know, ſir, that I have done any thing to de'ſerve this treatment.'—'Look'ee, ſir,' cries the colonel, 'if I had not formerly had ſome reſpect for 'you, I ſhould not think you worth my reſentment. 'However, as you are a gentleman born, and an officer, and as I have had an eſteem for you, I will 'give you ſome marks of it, by putting it in your 'power to do yourſelf juſtice. I will tell you, therefore, ſir, that you have acted like a ſcoundrel.'—'If 'we were not in the Park,' anſwered Booth warmly, 'I would thank you very properly for that compli'ment.'—'O ſir!' cries the colonel, 'we can be ſoon 'in a convenient place.' Upon which Booth anſwered he would attend him wherever he pleaſed.—The colonel then bid him come along, and ſtrutted forward directly up Conſtitution-Hill to Hyde-Park, Booth following him at firſt, and afterwards walking before him, till they came to that place which may be properly called the field of blood, being that part, a little to the left of the ring, which heroes have choſen for the ſcene of their exit out of this world.

Booth reached the ring ſome time before the colonel; for he mended not his pace any more than a Spaniard. To ſay truth, I believe it was not in his power; for he had ſo long accuſtomed himſelf to one and the ſame ſtrut, that as a horſe, uſed always to trotting, can ſcarce be forced into a gallop, ſo could no paſſion force the colonel to alter his pace.

At length, however, both parties arrived at the liſts, where the colonel very deliberately took off his wig and coat, and laid them on the graſs, and then drawing his ſword, advanced to Booth, who had likewiſe his

drawn weapon in his hand, but had made no other preparation for the combat.

The combatants now engaged with great fury, and after two or three paſſes, Booth ran the colonel through the body and threw him on the ground, at the ſame time poſſeſſing himſelf of the colonel's ſword.

As ſoon as the colonel was become maſter of his ſpeech, he called out to Booth in a very kind voice, and ſaid, 'You have done my buſineſs, and ſatisfied 'me that you are a man of honour, and that my bro-'ther James muſt have been miſtaken: for I am con-'vinced, that no man who will draw his ſword in ſo 'gallant a manner is capable of being a raſcal; d—n 'me, give me a buſs, my dear boy, I aſk your par-'don for that infamous appellation I diſhonoured 'your dignity with; but, d—n me, if it was not 'purely out of love, and to give you an opportunity 'of doing yourſelf juſtice, which I own you have 'done like a man of honour. What may be the con-'ſequence I know not, but, I hope, at leaſt, I ſhall 'live to reconcile you with my brother.'

Booth ſhowed great concern, and even horror in his countenance. 'Why, my dear colonel,' ſaid he, 'would you force me to this? For Heaven's ſake, tell 'me, what I have ever done to offend you.'

'Me!' cried the colonel. 'Indeed, my dear child, 'you never did any thing to offend me. Nay, I have 'acted the part of a friend to you in the whole affair. 'I maintained your cauſe with my brother as long as 'decency would permit. I could not flatly contradict 'him, though, indeed, I ſcarce believed him. But 'what could I do; if I had not fought with you, I 'muſt have been obliged to have fought with him? 'However, I hope, what is done will be ſufficient, 'and that matters may be *diſcommodated* without your 'being put to the neceſſity of fighting any more on 'this occaſion.'

'Never regard me,' cried Booth eagerly; 'for Hea-'ven's ſake think of your own preſervation. Let me 'put you into a chair and get you a ſurgeon.'

'Thou art a noble lad,' cries the colonel, who was now got on his legs, 'and I am glad the buſineſs is ſo well

well over. For though your ſword went quite through, it ſlanted ſo, that I apprehend there is little danger of life. However, I think there is enough done to put an honourable end to the affair, eſpecially as you was ſo haſty to diſarm me. I bleed a little, but I can walk to the houſe by the water; and if you will ſend me a chair thither, I ſhall be obliged to you.'

As the colonel refuſed any aſſiſtance (indeed he was very able to walk without it, though with ſomewhat leſs dignity than uſual) Booth ſet forward to Groveſnor-Gate, in order to procure the chair, and ſoon after returned with one to his friend; whom having conveyed into it, he attended himſelf on foot into Bond-ſtreet, where then lived a very eminent ſurgeon.

The ſurgeon having probed the wound, turned towards Booth, who was apparently the guilty perſon, and ſaid with a ſmile, 'Upon my word, Sir, you have 'performed the buſineſs with great dexterity.'

'Sir,' cries the colonel to the ſurgeon, 'I would 'not have you imagine I am afraid to die. I think I 'know more what belongs to the dignity of a man; 'and, I believe, I have ſhown it at the head of a line 'of battle. Do not impute my concern to that fear, 'when I aſk you whether there is, or is not any dan-'ger?'

'Really, colonel,' anſwered the ſurgeon, who well knew the complexion of the gentleman then under his hands, 'it would appear like preſumption to ſay, 'that a man who had been juſt run through the body, 'is in no manner of danger. But this, I think, I may 'aſſure you, that I yet perceive no very bad ſymptoms, 'and unleſs ſomething worſe ſhould appear, or a fe-'ver be the conſequence, I hope you may live to be 'again, with all your dignity, at the head of a line of 'battle.'

'I am glad to hear that is your opinion,' quoth the colonel, 'for I am not deſirous of dying, though I am not 'afraid of it. But if any thing worſe than you apprehend 'ſhould happen, I deſire you will be a witneſs of my de-'claration that this young gentleman is entirely inno-'cent. I forced him to do what he did. 'My dear

'Booth, I am pleaſed matters are as they are. You 'are the firſt man that ever gained an advantage over 'me; but it was very lucky for you that you diſarmed 'me, and I doubt not, but you have the *equananimi-* 'ty to think ſo. If the buſineſs, therefore, hath 'ended without doing any thing to the purpoſe, it 'was fortune's pleaſure, and neither of our faults.'

Booth heartily embraced the colonel, and aſſured him of the great ſatisfaction he had received from the ſurgeon's opinion; and ſoon after the two combatants took their leave of each other, The colonel, after he was dreſſed, went in a chair to his lodgings, and Booth walked on foot to his; where he luckily arrived without meeting any of Mr. Murphy's gang; a danger which never once occurred to his imagination till he was out of it.

The affair he had been about, had indeed ſo entirely occupied his mind, that it had obliterated every other idea; among the reſt, it cauſed him ſo abſolutely to forget the time of the day, that though he had exceeded the time of dining above two hours, he had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of being at home later than uſual.

CHAP. VI.

In which the reader will find matter worthy his conſideration.

AMELIA having waited above an hour for her huſband, concluded, as he was the moſt punctual man alive, that he had met with ſome engagement abroad, and ſat down to her meal with her children; which, as it was always uncomfortable in the abſence of her huſband, was very ſhort; ſo that before his return, all the apparatus of dining was entirely removed.

Booth ſat ſome time with his wife, expecting every minute when the little maid would make her appearance; at laſt curioſity, I believe, rather than appetite, made him aſk, how long it was to dinner? To *dinner!* my dear, anſwered Amelia; ſure you have *dined*, I hope? Booth replied in the negative; upon which,

which his wife ſtarted from her chair, and beſtirred herſelf as nimbly to provide him a repaſt, as the moſt induſtrious hoſteſs in the kingdom doth, when ſome unexpected gueſt of extraordinary quality arrives at her houſe.

The reader hath not, I think, from any paſſages hitherto recorded in this hiſtory, had much reaſon to accuſe Amelia of a blameable curioſity; he will not, I hope, conclude that ſhe gave an inſtance of any ſuch fault, when, upon Booth's having ſo long overſtaid his time, and ſo greatly miſtaken the hour of the day, and upon ſome other circumſtances of his behaviour (for he was too honeſt to be good at concealing any of his thoughts) ſhe ſaid to him, after he had done eating, 'My dear, I am ſure ſomething more than ordinary 'hath happened to-day, and I beg you will tell me 'what it is.'

Booth anſwered, that nothing of any conſequence had happened; that he had been detained by a friend, whom he met accidentally, longer than he expected. In ſhort, he made many ſhuffling and evaſive anſwers, not boldly lying out, which, perhaps, would have ſucceeded, but poorly and vainly endeavouring to reconcile falſehood with truth. An attempt which ſeldom fails to betray the moſt practiſed deceiver.

How impoſſible was it therefore for Booth to ſucceed in an art for which nature had ſo entirely diſqualified him. His countenance indeed confeſſed faſter than his tongue denied; and the whole of his behaviour gave Amelia an alarm, and made her ſuſpect ſomething very bad had happened; and as her thoughts turned preſently on the badneſs of their circumſtances, ſhe feared ſome miſchief from his creditors had befallen him: for ſhe was too ignorant of ſuch matters to know, that if he had fallen into the hands of the Philiſtines (which is the name given by the faithful to bailiffs) he would hardly have been able ſo ſoon to recover his liberty. Booth at laſt perceived her to be ſo uneaſy, that as he ſaw no hopes of contriving any fiction to ſatisfy her, he thought himſelf obliged to tell her the truth, or at leaſt part of the truth, and confeſſed that he had had a little ſkirmiſh with Colonel

Bath, in which, he ſaid, the colonel had received a ſlight wound, not all dangerous; and this, ſays he, is all the whole matter. 'If it be ſo,' cries Amelia, 'I thank Heaven no worſe hath happened; but why, 'my dear, will you ever converſe with that madman, 'who can embrace a friend one moment, and fight 'with him the next?'—'Nay,' my dear,' anſwered Booth, 'you yourſelf muſt confeſs, though he be a 'little too much on the *qui vive*, he is a man of great 'honour and good-nature.'—'Tell me not,' replied ſhe, 'of ſuch good-nature and honour as would ſa-'crifice a friend, and a whole family to a ridiculous 'whim. O Heavens!' cried ſhe, falling upon her knees, 'from what miſery have I eſcaped, from what 'have theſe poor babes eſcaped through your gracious 'providence this day!'—Then turning to her huſband —ſhe cried—'But are you ſure the monſter's wound is 'no more dangerous than you ſay? A monſter ſurely 'I may call him, who can quarrel with a man that 'could not, that I am convinced would not offend 'him.'

Upon this queſtion, Booth repeated the aſſurances which the ſurgeon had given them, perhaps with a little enlargement, which pretty well ſatisfied Amelia; and inſtead of blaming her huſband for what he had done, ſhe tenderly embraced him, and again returned thanks to Heaven for his ſafety.

In the evening, Booth inſiſted on paying a ſhort viſit to the colonel, highly againſt the inclination of Amelia, who, by many arguments and entreaties endeavoured to diſſuade her huſband from continuing an acquaintance; in which, ſhe ſaid, ſhe ſhould always foreſee much danger for the future. However, ſhe was at laſt prevailed upon to acquieſce; and Booth went to the colonel, whoſe lodgings happened to be in the verge as well as his own.

He found the colonel in his night-gown, and his great chair, engaged with another officer at a game of cheſs. He roſe immediately, and having heartily embraced Booth, preſented him to his friend, ſaying, he had the honour to introduce to him as brave and as *fortitudinous* a man as any in the king's dominions.—

He

He then took Booth with him into the next room, and desired him not to mention a word of what had happened in the morning, saying, 'I am very well satisfied that no more hath happened; however, as it 'ended in nothing, I could wish it might remain a 'secret.' Booth told him he was heartily glad to find him so well, and promised never to mention it more to any one.

The game at chess being but just begun, and neither of the parties having gained any considerable advantage, they neither of them insisted on continuing it; and now the colonel's antagonist took his leave, and left the colonel and Booth together.

As soon as they were alone, the latter earnestly entreated the former to acquaint him with the real cause of his anger; 'for may I perish,' cries Booth, 'if I 'can even guess what I have ever done to offend either 'you, or your brother Colonel James.'

'Look'ee, child,' cries the colonel, 'I tell you I 'am for my own part satisfied: for I am convinced 'that a man who will fight, can never be a rascal; 'and therefore, why should you enquire any more of 'me at present? When I see my brother James, I 'hope to reconcile all matters, and perhaps no more 'swords need be draw on this occasion.' But Booth still persisting in his desire, the colonel, after some hesitation, with a tremendous oath, cried out, 'I do 'not think myself at liberty to refuse you, after the in'dignity I offered you; so, since you demand it of 'me, I will inform you. My brother told me you 'had used him dishonourably, and had devilicated his 'character behind his back. He gave me his word 'too, that he was well assured of what he said. 'What could I have done, though I own to you I did 'not believe him, and your behaviour since hath con'vinced me I was in the right; I must either have 'given him the lie and fought with him, or else I 'was obliged to behave as I did, and fight with you. 'And now, my lad, I leave it to you to do as you 'please; but if you are laid under any necessity to do 'yourself further justice, it is your own fault.'

'Alas! colonel,' anſwered Booth, 'beſides the obligations I have to the colonel, I have really ſo much love for him, that I think of nothing leſs than reſentment. All I wiſh, is to have this affair brought to an eclairciſſement, and to ſatisfy him that he is in an error: for though his aſſertions are cruelly injurious, and I have never deſerved them, yet I am convinced he would not ſay what he did not himſelf think. Some raſcal, envious of his friendſhip for me, hath belyed me to him; and the only reſentment I deſire is to convince him of his miſtake.'

At theſe words—the colonel grinned horribly a ghaſtly ſmile, or rather ſneer, and anſwered, 'Young gentleman, you may do as you pleaſe; but by the eternal dignity of man, if any man breathing had taken a liberty with my character,—here, here—Mr. Booth (ſhowing his fingers) here—d—n me, ſhould be his noſtrils: he ſhould breathe through my hands, and breathe his laſt—d—n me.'

Booth anſwered, 'I think, Colonel, I may appeal to your teſtimony that I dare do myſelf juſtice; ſince he who dare draw his ſword againſt you, can hardly be ſuppoſed to fear any other perſon; but I repeat to you again, that I love colonel James ſo well, and am ſo greatly obliged to him, that it would be almoſt indifferent to me, whether I directed my ſword againſt his breaſt, or my own.'

The colonel's muſcles were conſiderably ſoftened by Booth's laſt ſpeech; but he again contracted them into a vaſt degree of fierceneſs, before he cried out—'Boy, thou haſt reaſon enough to be vain! for thou art the firſt perſon that ever could proudly ſay he gained an advantage over me in combat. I believe, indeed, thou art not afraid of any man breathing, and as I know thou haſt ſome obligations to my brother, I do not diſcommend thee; for nothing more becomes the dignity of a man than gratitude. Beſides, as I am ſatisfyed my brother can produce the author of the ſlander—I ſay, I am ſatisfied of that, d—n me, if any man alive dares aſſert the contrary, for that would be to make my brother

'himſelf

'himſelf a liar—I will make him produce his author; 'and then, my dear boy, your doing yourſelf pro- 'per juſtice there, will bring you finely out of the 'whole affair. As ſoon as my ſurgeon gives me leave 'to go abroad, which, I hope, will be in a few days, 'I will bring my brother James to a tavern, where 'you ſhall meet us; and I will engage my honour, 'my whole dignity to you, to make you friends.'

The aſſurance of the colonel gave Booth great pleaſure; for few perſons ever loved a friend better than he did James: and as for doing military juſtice on the author of that ſcandalous report which had incenſed his friend againſt him, not Bath himſelf was ever more ready on ſuch an occaſion than Booth to execute it. He ſoon after took his leave, and returned home in high ſpirits to his Amelia, whom he found in Mrs. Elliſon's apartment, engaged in a party at ombre with that lady, and her right honourable couſin.

His lordſhip had, it ſeems, had a ſecond interview with the great man, and having obtained further hopes (for I think there was not yet an abſolute promiſe) of ſucceſs in Mr. Booth's affairs, his uſual good nature brought him immediately to acquaint Mr. Booth with it. As he did not therefore find him at home, and as he met with the two ladies together, he reſolved to ſtay till his friend's return, which he was aſſured would not be long, eſpecially as he was ſo lucky, he ſaid, to have no particular engagement that whole evening.

We remarked before, that his lordſhip, at the firſt interview with Amelia, had diſtinguiſhed her by a more particular addreſs from the other ladies; but that now appeared to be rather owing to his perfect good breeding, as ſhe was then to be conſidered as the miſtreſs of the houſe, than from any other preference. His preſent behaviour made this ſtill more manifeſt; for as he was now in Mrs. Elliſon's apartment, though ſhe was his relation and an old acquaintance, he applied his converſation rather more to her than to Amelia. His eyes, indeed, were now and then guilty of the contrary diſtinction, but this was only by ſtealth; for they conſtantly withdrew the moment they were

diſ-

diſcovered. In ſhort, he treated Amelia with the greateſt diſtance, and at the ſame time with the moſt profound and awful reſpect; his converſation was ſo general, ſo lively, and ſo obliging, that Amelia, when ſhe added to his agreeableneſs the obligations ſhe had to him for his friendſhip to Booth, was certainly as much pleaſed with his lordſhip, as any virtuous woman can poſſibly be with any man, beſides her own huſband.

CHAP. VII.

Containing various matters.

WE have already mentioned the good humour in which Booth returned home; and the reader will eaſily believe it was not a little increaſed by the good humour in which he found his company. My lord received him with the utmoſt marks of friendſhip and affection, and told him that his affairs went on as well almoſt as he himſelf could deſire, and that he doubted not very ſoon to wiſh him joy of a company.

When Booth had made a proper return to all his lordſhip's unparalleled goodneſs, he whiſpered Amelia that the colonel was entirely out of danger, and almoſt as well as himſelf. This made her ſatisfaction complete, threw her into ſuch ſpirits, and gave ſuch a luſtre to her eyes, that her face, as Horace ſays, was too dazzling to be looked at; it was certainly too handſome to be looked at without the higheſt admiration.

His lordſhip departed about ten o'clock, and left the company in raptures with him, eſpecially the two ladies, of whom it is difficult to ſay which exceeded the other in his commendations. Mrs. Elliſon ſwore ſhe believed he was the beſt of all humankind; and Amelia without making any exception, declared he was the fineſt gentleman, and moſt agreeable man ſhe had ever ſeen in her life; adding, it was great pity he ſhould remain ſingle. 'That's true indeed,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'and I have often lamented it, nay, I 'am aſtoniſhed at it, conſidering the great liking he

'always

'always ſhows for our ſex, and he may certainly have 'the choice of all. The real reaſon, I believe, is his 'fondneſs for his ſiſter's children. I declare, madam, 'if you was to ſee his behaviour to them, you would 'think they were his own. Indeed, he is vaſtly fond 'of all manner of children.'—'Good creature,' cries Amelia, 'if ever he doth me the honour of another 'viſit, I am reſolved I will ſhow him my little things. 'I think, Mrs. Elliſon, as you ſay my lord loves 'children, I may ſay, without vanity, he will not ſee 'many ſuch.'—'No, indeed, will he not,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon, 'and now I think on't, madam, I won-'der at my own ſtupidity in never making the offer 'before; but ſince you put it into my head, if you 'will give me leave, I'll take maſter and miſs to wait 'on my lord's nephew and niece. They are very 'pretty behaved children; and little maſter and miſs 'will be, I dare ſwear, very happy in their acquain-'tance; beſides, if my lord himſelf ſhould ſee them, 'I know what will happen; for he is the moſt ge-'nerous of all human beings.'

Amelia very readily accepted the favour which Mrs. Elliſon offered her; but Booth expreſſed ſome reluct-ance. 'Upon my word, my dear,' ſaid he, with a ſmile, 'this behaviour of our's puts me in mind of the com-'mon conduct of beggars; who, whenever they re-'ceive a favour, are ſure to ſend other objects to the 'ſame fountain of charity. Don't we, my dear, re-'pay our obligations to my lord in the ſame manner, 'by ſending our children a begging to him?'

'O beaſtly!' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'how could ſuch 'a thought enter your brains! I proteſt, madam, I 'begin to grow aſhamed of this huſband of your's. 'How can you have ſo vulgar a way of thinking? 'Begging, indeed! the poor little dear things a beg-'ging—If my lord was capable of ſuch a thought, 'though he was my own brother inſtead of my couſin, 'I ſhould ſcorn him too much ever to enter his doors.' —'O dear madam,' anſwered Amelia, 'you take 'Mr. Booth too ſeriouſly, when he was only in jeſt; 'and the children ſhall wait upon you whenever you 'pleaſe.'

Though

Though Booth had been a little more in earneſt than Amelia had repreſented him, and was not, perhaps, quite ſo much in the wrong as he was conſidered by Mrs. Elliſon; yet, ſeeing there were two to one againſt him, he wiſely thought proper to recede, and let his ſimile go off with that air of a jeſt, which his wife had given it.

Mrs. Elliſon, however, could not let it paſs without paying ſome compliments to Amelia's underſtanding, nor without ſome obſcure reflections upon Booth, with whom ſhe was more offended than the matter required. She was indeed a woman of moſt profuſe generoſity, and could not bear a thought which ſhe deemed vulgar or ſneaking. She afterwards launched forth the moſt profuſe encomiums of his lordſhip's liberality, and concluded the evening with ſome inſtances which he had given of that virtue, which, if not the nobleſt, is, perhaps, one of the moſt uſeful to ſociety, with which great and rich men can be endowed.

The next morning early, Serjeant Atkinſon came to wait on Lieutenant Booth, and deſired to ſpeak with his honour in private. Upon which, the lieutenant and ſerjeant took a walk together in the Park. Booth expected every minute when the ſerjeant would open his mouth, under which expectation, he continued till he came to the end of the Mall, and ſo he might have continued till he came to the end of the world: for though ſeveral words ſtood at the end of the ſerjeant's lips, there they were likely to remain for ever. He was indeed in the condition of a miſer, whom a charitable impulſe hath impelled to draw a few pence to the edge of his pocket, where they are altogether as ſecure, as if they were in the bottom: for, as the one hath not the heart to part with a farthing; ſo neither hath the other the heart to ſpeak a word.

Booth at length wondering that the ſerjeant did not ſpeak, aſked him, what his buſineſs was; when the latter, with a ſtammering voice, began the following apology: 'I hope, Sir, your honour will not be angry, nor take any thing amiſs of me. I do aſſure

'you,

'you, it was not of my ſeeking, nay, I dare not pro-
'ceed in the matter without firſt aſking your leave.
'Indeed, if I had taken any liberties from the good-
'neſs you have been pleaſed to ſhow me, I ſhould look
'upon myſelf as one of the moſt worthleſs and de-
'ſpicable of wretches; but nothing is farther from
'my thoughts. I know the diſtance which is be-
'tween us; and becauſe your honour hath been ſo
'kind and good as to treat me with more familiarity
'than any other officer ever did, if I had been baſe
'enough to take any freedoms, or to encroach upon
'your honour's goodneſs, I ſhould deſerve to be whip-
'ped through the regiment. I hope therefore, Sir,
'you will not ſuſpect me of any ſuch attempt.'

'What can all this mean, Atkinſon,' cries Booth;
'what mighty matter would you introduce with all
'this previous apology?'

'I am almoſt aſhamed and afraid to mention it,' an-
ſwered the ſerjeant, 'and yet I am ſure, your honour
'will believe what I have ſaid, and not think any
'thing owing to my own preſumption; and at the
'ſame time, I have no reaſon to think you would do
'any thing to ſpoil my fortune in an honeſt way,
'when it is dropped into my lap without my own ſeek-
'ing. For may I periſh if it is not all the lady's own
'goodneſs, and I hope in Heaven, with your ho-
'nour's leave, I ſhall live to make her amends for it.'
—In a word, that we may not detain the reader's curioſity quite ſo long as he did Booth's, he acquainted that gentleman that he had had an offer of marriage from a lady of his acquaintance, to whoſe company he had introduced him, and deſired his permiſſion to accept of it.

Booth muſt have been very dull indeed, if after what the ſerjeant had ſaid, and after what he had heard Mrs. Elliſon ſay, he had wanted any other information concerning the lady. He anſwered him briſkly and chearfully, that he had his free conſent to marry any woman whatever; 'and the greater and richer
'ſhe is,' added he, 'the more I ſhall be pleaſed with
'the match. I don't enquire who the lady is,' ſaid

he,

he, ſmiling, 'but I hope ſhe will make as good a wife, 'as I am convinced her huſband will deſerve.'

'Your honour hath been always too good to me,' cries Atkinſon, 'but this I promiſe you, I will do all in 'my power to merit the kindneſs ſhe is pleaſed to ſhow 'me. I will be bold to ſay ſhe will marry an honeſt 'man, though he is but a poor one; and ſhe ſhall 'never want any thing which I can give her or do 'for her, while my name is Joſeph Atkinſon.'

'And ſo her name is a ſecret, Joe; is it?' cries Booth.

'Why, Sir,' anſwered the ſerjeant, 'I hope your 'honour will not inſiſt upon knowing that, as I 'think it would be diſhonourable in me to mention 'it.'

'Not at all,' replied Booth, 'I am the fartheſt in 'the world from any ſuch deſire. I know thee better 'than to imagine thou wouldſt diſcloſe the name of a 'fair lady.' Booth then ſhook Atkinſon heartily by the hand, and aſſured him earneſtly of the joy he had in his good fortune; for which the good ſerjeant failed not of making all proper acknowledgements. After which they parted, and Booth returned home.

As Mrs. Elliſon opened the door, Booth haſtily ruſhed by; for he had the utmoſt difficulty to prevent laughing in her face. He ran directly up ſtairs, and throwing himſelf into a chair, diſcharged ſuch a fit of laughter as greatly ſurpriſed, and at firſt, almoſt frightened his wife.

Amelia, it will be ſuppoſed, preſently enquired into the cauſe of this phænomenon, with which Booth, as ſoon as he was able (for that was not within a few minutes) acquainted her. The news did not affect her in the ſame manner it had affected her huſband. On the contrary, ſhe cried, 'I proteſt I cannot gueſs 'what makes you ſee it in ſo ridiculous a light. I 'really think Mrs. Elliſon hath choſen very well. I 'am convinced Joe will make her one of the beſt of 'huſbands; and in my opinion, that is the greateſt 'bleſſing a woman can be poſſeſſed of.'

However, when Mrs. Elliſon came into her room a little *while afterwards* to fetch the children, Amelia became

of

of a more riſible diſpoſition, eſpecially when the former turning to Booth, who was then preſent, ſaid, 'So, captain, my jantee ſerjeant was very early here 'this morning. I ſcolded my maid heartily for letting him wait ſo long in the entry like a lacquais, 'when ſhe might have ſhown him into my inner apartment.' At which words, Booth burſt out into a very loud laugh; and Amelia herſelf could no more prevent laughing than ſhe could bluſhing.

'Heyday!' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'what have I ſaid 'to cauſe all this mirth?' and at the ſame time bluſhed, and looked very ſilly, as is always the caſe with perſons who ſuſpect themſelves to be the objects of laughter, without abſolutely taking what it is which makes them ridiculous.

Booth ſtill continued laughing; but Amelia compoſing her muſcles, ſaid, 'I aſk your pardon, dear 'Mrs. Elliſon; but Mr. Booth hath been in a ſtrange 'giggling humour all this morning; and I really 'think it is infectious.'

'I aſk your pardon too, madam,' cries Booth, 'but one is ſometimes unaccountably fooliſh.'

'Nay, but ſeriouſly,' ſaid ſhe, 'what is the matter?—Something I ſaid about the ſerjeant, I believe; 'but you may laugh as much as you pleaſe, I am not 'aſhamed of owning, I think him one of the prettieſt 'fellows I ever ſaw in my life; and, I own, I ſcolded 'my maid at ſuffering him to wait in my entry; and 'where is the mighty ridiculous matter, pray?'

'None at all, anſwered Booth, 'and, I hope, 'the next time he will be uſhered into your inner 'apartment.'

'Why ſhould he not, Sir?' replied ſhe, 'for where'ever he is uſhered, I am convinced he will behave 'himſelf as a gentleman ſhould.'

Here Amelia put an end to the diſcourſe, or it might have proceeded to very great lengths: for Booth was of a waggiſh inclination; and Mrs. Elliſon was not a lady of the niceſt delicacy.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The heroick behaviour of Colonel Bath.

BOOTH went this morning to pay a ſecond viſit to the colonel, where he found Colonel James. Both the colonel and the lieutenant appeared a little ſhocked at their firſt meeting; but matters were ſoon cleared up; for the former preſently advanced to the latter, ſhook him heartily by the hand, and ſaid—'Mr. Booth, I am aſhamed to ſee you; for I have 'injured you, and I heartily aſk your pardon. I am 'now perfectly convinced, that what I hinted to my 'brother, and which I find had like to have pro-'duced ſuch fatal conſequences, was entirely ground-'leſs. If you will be contented with my aſking your 'pardon, and ſpare me the diſagreeable remembrance 'of what led me into my error, I ſhall eſteem it as 'the higheſt obligation.'

Booth anſwered, 'As to what regards yourſelf, 'my dear colonel, I am abundantly ſatisfied; but, as 'I am convinced, ſome raſcal hath been my enemy 'with you in the cruelleſt manner, I hope you will 'not deny me the opportunity of kicking him through 'the world.'

'By all the dignity of man,' cries Colonel Bath, 'the boy ſpeaks with ſpirit, and his requeſt is rea-'ſonable.'

Colonel James heſitated a moment, and then whiſpered Booth that he would give him all the ſatisfaction imaginable, concerning the whole affair, when they were alone together; upon which, Booth addreſſing himſelf to Colonel Bath, the diſcourſe turned on other matters, during the remainder of the viſit, which was but ſhort, and then both went away together, leaving Colonel Bath as well as it was poſſible to expect, more to the ſatisfaction of Booth than of Colonel James, who would not have been diſpleaſed if his wound had been more dangerous: for he was grown ſomewhat weary of a diſpoſition that he rather called captious *than heroic*, and which, as he every day more and *more hated* his wife, he apprehended might ſometime

or other give him ſome trouble: for Bath was the moſt affectionate of brothers, and had often ſwore in the preſence of James, that he would eat any man alive who ſhould uſe his ſiſter ill.

Colonel Bath was well ſatisfied that his brother and the lieutenant were gone out with a deſign of tilting, from which he offered not a ſyllable to diſſuade them, as he was convinced it was right, and that Booth could not in honour take, nor the colonel give any leſs ſatisfaction. When they had been gone, therefore, about half an hour, he rang his bell, to enquire if there was any news of his brother; a queſtion which he repeated every ten minutes, for the ſpace of two hours, when having heard nothing of him, he began to conclude that both were killed on the ſpot.

While he was in this ſtate of anxiety, his ſiſter came to ſee him; for, notwithſtanding his deſire of keeping it a ſecret, the duel had blazed all over the town. After receiving ſome kind congratulations on his ſafety, and ſome unkind hints concerning the warmth of his temper, the colonel aſked her when ſhe had ſeen her huſband; ſhe anſwered, not that morning. He then communicated to her his ſuſpicion: told her he was convinced his brother had drawn his ſword that day, and that as neither of them had heard any thing from him, he began to apprehend the worſt that could happen.

Neither Miſs Bellamy, nor Mrs. Cibber, were ever in a greater conſternation on the ſtage, than now appeared in the countenance of Mrs. James. 'Good 'Heavens! brother,' cries ſhe, 'what do you tell 'me! you have frightened me to death.—Let your 'man get me a glaſs of water immediately, if you 'have not a mind to ſee me die before your face. 'When, where, how was this quarrel, why did you 'not prevent it, if you knew of it? Is it not enough 'to be every day tormenting me with hazarding your 'own life, but muſt you bring the life of one who 'you know muſt be and ought to be ſo much the 'deareſt of all to me, into danger? Take your ſword 'brother, take your ſword, and plunge it into my

'boſom;

'bosom; it would be kinder of you than to fill it 'with such dreads and terrors.'—Here she swallowed the glass of water, and then threw herself back in her chair, as if she had intended to faint away.

Perhaps, if she had so, the colonel would have lent her no assistance; for she had hurt him more than by ten thousand stabs. He sat erect in his chair, with his eye-brows knit, his forehead wrinkled, his eyes flashing with fire, his teeth grating against each other, and breathing horror all around him. In this posture, he sat for some time silent, casting disdainful looks at his sister. At last, his voice found its way through a passion which had almost choaked him, and he cried out: 'Sister, what have I done to deserve the opinion 'you express of me? which of my actions hath made 'you conclude that I am a rascal and a coward? look 'at that poor sword, which never woman yet saw but in 'its sheath, what hath that done to merit your desire 'that it should be contaminated with the blood of a 'woman?'

'Alas! brother,' cried she, 'I know not what you 'say; you are desirous, I believe, to terrify me out of 'the little senses I have left. What can I have said in 'the agonies of grief, into which you threw me, to 'deserve this passion?'

'What have you said,' answered the colonel, 'you 'have said that which if a man had spoken, nay, 'd—n me, if he had but hinted that he durst even 'think, I would have made him eat my sword, by 'all the dignity of man, I would have crumbled his 'soul into powder.—But, I consider that the words 'were spoken by a woman, and I am calm again. 'Consider, my dear, that you are my sister, and be- 'have yourself with more spirit. I have only men- 'tioned to you my surmise. It may not have hap- 'pened as I suspect; but let what will have happen- 'ed, you will have the comfort that your husband 'hath behaved himself with becoming dignity, and 'lies in the bed of honour.'

'Talk not to me of such comfort,' replied the lady, 'it is a loss I cannot survive; but why do I sit here 'lamenting myself? I will go this instant and know

'the

'the worſt of my fate, if my trembling limbs will 'carry me to my coach.—Good morrow, dear bro- 'ther; whatever becomes of me, I am glad to find 'you out of danger.'—The colonel paid her his proper compliments, and ſhe then left the room, but returned inſtantly back; ſaying, 'Brother, I muſt 'beg the favour of you to let your footman ſtep to 'my mantua-maker, I am ſure it is a miracle in my 'preſent diſtracted condition, how it came into my 'head.'—The footman was preſently ſummoned, and Mrs. James delivered him his meſſage, which was to countermand the orders which ſhe had given that very morning, to make her up a new ſuit of brocade. 'Heaven knows,' ſays ſhe, 'now, when I can wear 'brocade, or whether I ever ſhall wear it.' And now, having repeated her meſſage with great exact- neſs, leſt there ſhould be any miſtake, ſhe again la- mented her wretched ſituation, and then departed, leaving the colonel in full expectation of hearing ſpeedy news of the fatal iſſue of the battle.

But though the reader ſhould entertain the ſame curioſity, we muſt be excuſed from ſatisfying it, till we have firſt accounted for an incident which we have related in this very chapter, and which we think de- ſerves ſome ſolution. The critic, I am convinced, already is apprized that I mean the friendly behaviour of James to Booth, which, from what we had before recorded, ſeemed ſo little to be expected.

It muſt be remembered, that the anger which the former of theſe gentlemen had conceived againſt the latter, aroſe entirely from the falſe account given by Miſs Matthews of Booth, whom that lady had accuſed to Colonel James of having as baſely as wickedly tra- duced his character.

Now, of all the miniſters of vengeance, there are none with whom the devil deals ſo treacherouſly, as with thoſe whom he employs in executing the miſ- chievous purpoſes of an angry miſtreſs; for no ſooner is revenge executed on an offending lover, than it is ſure to be repented, and all the anger which before raged againſt the beloved object, returns with double fury on the head of his aſſaſſin.

Miſs

Miſs Matthews, therefore, no ſooner heard that Booth was killed (for ſo was the report at firſt, and by a colonel of the army) than ſhe immediately concluded it to be James. She was extremely ſhocked with the news, and her heart inſtantly began to relent. All the reaſons on which ſhe had founded her love recurred in the ſtrongeſt and livelieſt colours to her mind, and all the cauſes of her hatred ſunk down and diſappeared: or if the leaſt remembrance of any thing which had diſobliged her remained, her heart became his zealous advocate, and ſoon ſatisfied her that her own fates were more to be blamed than he, and that, without being a villain, he could have acted no otherwiſe than he had done.

In this temper of mind, ſhe looked on herſelf as the murderer of an innocent man, and what to her was much worſe, of the man ſhe had loved, and ſtill did love with all the violence imaginable. She looked on James as the tool with which ſhe had done this murder; and as it is uſual for people who have raſhly or inadvertently made any animate or inanimate thing the inſtrument of miſchief, to hate the innocent means by which the miſchief was effected: (for this is a ſubtle method which the mind invents to excuſe ourſelves, the laſt object on whom we would willingly wreak our vengeance;) ſo Miſs Matthews now hated and curſed James as the efficient cauſe of that act which ſhe herſelf had contrived, and laboured to carry into execution.

She ſat down therefore in a furious agitation, little ſhort of madneſs, and wrote the following letter:

'I Hope this will find you in the hands of juſtice, 'for the murther of one of the beſt friends that ever 'man was bleſt with. In one ſenſe, indeed, he may 'ſeem to have deſerved his fate, by chooſing a fool 'for his friend; for who but a fool would have be'lieved what the anger and rage of an injured woman 'ſuggeſted;—a ſtory ſo improbable, that I could 'ſcarce be thought in earneſt when I mentioned it.

'Know then, cruel wretch, that poor Booth loved 'you of all men breathing, and was, I believe, in

'your commendation, guilty of as much falſehood, 'as I was in what I told you concerning him.

'If this knowledge makes you miſerable, it is no 'more than you have made

'The unhappy

'F. MATTHEWS.'

CHAP. IX.

Being the laſt chapter of the fifth book.

WE ſhall now return to Colonel James and Mr. Booth, who walked together from Colonel Bath's lodging with much more peaceable intentions than that gentleman had conjectured, who dreamed of nothing but ſwords and guns, and implements of war.

The bird-cage walk in the Park was the ſcene appointed by James for unburthening his mind. Thither they came, and there James acquainted Booth with all that which the reader knows already, and gave him the letter which we have inſerted at the end of the laſt chapter.

Booth expreſſed great aſtoniſhment at this relation, not without venting ſome deteſtation of the wickedneſs of Miſs Matthews; upon which James took him up, ſaying, he ought not to ſpeak with ſuch abhorrence of faults which love for him had occaſioned.

'Can you mention love, my dear colonel,' cried Booth, 'and ſuch a woman in the ſame breath?'

'Yes, faith! can I,' ſays James; 'for the devil take 'me, if I know a more lovely woman in the world.' Here he began to deſcribe her whole perſon; but as we cannot inſert all the deſcription, ſo we ſhall omit it all; and concluded with ſaying, 'Curſe me, if I 'don't think her the fineſt creature in the univerſe. I 'would give half my eſtate, Booth, ſhe loved me as 'well as ſhe doth you. Though, on ſecond con'ſideration, I believe I ſhould repent that bargain; 'for then, very poſſibly, I ſhould not care a farthing 'for her.'

'You will pardon me, dear colonel,' anſwered Booth; 'but to me there appears ſomewhat very ſin-

'gular in your way of thinking. Beauty is indeed 'the object of liking, great qualities of admiration, 'good ones of eſteem; but, the devil take me, if I 'think any thing but love to be the object of love.'

'Is there not ſomething too ſelfiſh,' replied James, 'in that opinion; but, without conſidering it in that 'light, is it not of all things the moſt inſipid? All 'oil! all ſugar! Zounds! it is enough to cloy the 'ſharp-ſet appetite of a parſon. Acids ſurely are the 'moſt likely to quicken.'

'I do not love reaſoning in allegories,' cries Booth, 'but with regard to love, I declare I never found any 'thing cloying in it. I have lived almoſt alone with 'my wife near three years together, was never tired 'with her company, nor ever wiſhed for any other; 'and I am ſure, I never taſted any of the acid you 'mention to quicken my appetite;'

'This is all very extraordinary and romantic to 'me,' anſwered the colonel. 'If I was to be ſhut 'up three years with the ſame woman, which 'Heaven forbid! nothing, I think, could keep me 'alive, but a temper as violent as that of Miſs Mat-'thews. As to love, it would make me ſick to 'death in the twentieth part of that time. If I was 'ſo condemned, let me ſee, what would I wiſh the 'woman to be? I think no one virtue would be ſuffi-'cient. With the ſpirit of a tigreſs, I would have 'her be prude, a ſcold, a ſcholar, a critic, a wit, 'a politician, and a jacobite; and then, perhaps, 'eternal oppoſition would keep up our ſpirits; and 'wiſhing one another daily at the devil, we ſhould 'make a ſhift to drag on a damnable ſtate of life, 'without much ſpleen or vapours.'

'And ſo, you do not intend,' cries Booth, 'to break 'with this woman,'

'Not more than I have already, if I can help it,' anſwered the colonel.

'And you will be reconciled to her,' ſaid Booth.

'Yes, faith! will I, if I can,' anſwered the colo-nel——'I hope you have no objection.'

'None, my dear friend,' ſaid Booth, 'unleſs on 'your account.'

'I do

'I do believe you,' ſaid the colonel 'and yet let 'me tell you, you are a very extraordinary man, not 'to deſire me to quit her on your own account. Up-'on my ſoul, I begin to pity the woman, who hath 'placed her affection, perhaps, on the only man in 'England of your age, who would not return it. But 'for my part, I promiſe you, I like her beyond all 'other women; and whilſt that is the caſe, my boy, 'if her mind was as full of iniquity as Pandora's box 'was of diſeaſes, I'd hug her cloſe in my arms, and 'only take as much care as poſſible to keep the lid 'down for fear of miſchief.—But come, dear Booth,' ſaid he, 'let us conſider your affairs; for I am aſhamed 'of having neglected them ſo long; and the only 'anger I have againſt this wench, is, that ſhe was the 'occaſion of it.'

Booth then acquainted the colonel with the pro-miſes he had received from the noble lord; upon which, James ſhook him by the hand, and heartily wiſhed him joy, crying, 'I do aſſure you, if you have 'his intereſt, you will need no other; I did not know 'you was acquainted with him.'

To which Mr. Booth anſwered, that he was but a new acquaintance, and that he was recommended to him by a lady.

'A lady,' cries the colonel,—'well, I don't aſk 'her name. You are a happy man, Booth, amongſt 'the women; and I aſſure you, you could have no 'ſtronger recommendation. The peer loves the la-'dies, I believe, as well as ever Mark Antony did; 'and it is not his fault, if he hath not ſpent as much 'upon them. If he once fixes his eye upon a wo-'man, he will ſtick at nothing to get her.

'Ay, indeed!' cries Booth. 'Is that his character?'

'Ay, faith!' anſwered the colonel, 'and the cha-'racter of moſt men beſides him. Few of them, I 'mean, will ſtick at any thing beſides their money. '*Juſque à la Bourſe*, is ſometimes the boundary of 'love as well as friendſhip. And, indeed, I never 'knew any other man part with his money ſo very 'freely on theſe occaſions. You ſee, dear Booth, the 'confidence I have in your honour.'

'I hope, indeed, you have,' cries Booth, 'but I 'don't ſee what inſtance you now give me of that 'confidence.'

'Have not I ſhown you,' anſwered James, 'where 'you may carry your goods to market? I can aſſure 'you, my friend, that is a ſecret I would not impart 'to every man in your ſituation, and all circum-'ſtances conſidered.'

'I am very ſorry, Sir,' cries Booth very gravely, and turning as pale as death, 'you ſhould entertain 'a thought of this kind--a thought which hath al-'moſt frozen up my blood. I am unwilling to be-'lieve there are ſuch villains in the world; but there 'is none of them whom I ſhould deteſt half ſo much 'as myſelf, if my own mind had ever ſuggeſted to 'me a hint of that kind. I have taſted of ſome di-'ſtreſſes of life, and I know not to what greater I 'may be driven; but my honour, I thank Heaven, is 'in my own power, and I can boldly ſay to fortune, 'ſhe ſhall not rob me of it.'

'Have I not expreſſed that confidence, my dear 'Booth?' anſwered the colonel. 'And what you ſay 'now well juſtifies my opinion; for I do agree with 'you, that, conſidering all things, it would be the 'higheſt inſtance of diſhonour.'

'Diſhonour, indeed!' returned Booth. 'What! to 'proſtitute my wife!--Can I think there is ſuch a 'wretch breathing?'

'I don't know that,' ſaid the Colonel; 'but I am 'ſure, it was very far from my intention to inſinuate 'the leaſt hint of any ſuch matter to you. Nor can 'I imagine how you yourſelf could conceive ſuch a 'thought. The goods I meant, were no other than 'the charming perſon of Miſs Matthews; for whom 'I am convinced my lord would bid a ſwinging price 'againſt me.'

Booth's countenance greatly cleared up at this declaration, and he anſwered with a ſmile, that he hoped he need not give the colonel any aſſurances on that head. However, though he was ſatisfied with regard to the colonel's ſuſpicions; yet ſome chimeras now aroſe in his brain, which gave him

no very agreeable ſenſations. What theſe were the ſagacious reader may probably ſuſpect; but, if he ſhould not, we may, perhaps, have occaſion to open them in the ſequel. Here we will put an end to this dialogue, and to the fifth book of this hiſtory.

AMELIA.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

Panegyrics on beauty, with other grave matters.

THE Colonel and Booth walked together to the latter's lodging; for as it was not that day in the week in which all parts of the town are indifferent, Booth could not wait on the colonel.

When they arrived in Spring-Garden, Booth to his great ſurpriſe found no one at home but the maid. In truth Amelia had accompanied Mrs. Elliſon and her children to his lordſhip's; for as her little girl ſhowed a great unwillingneſs to go without her, the fond mother was eaſily perſuaded to make one of the company.

Booth had ſcarce uſhered the colonel up to his apartment, when a ſervant from Mrs. James knocked haſtily at the door. The lady, not meeting with her huſband at her return home, began to deſpair of him, and performed every thing which was decent on the occaſion. An apothecary was preſently called with Hartſhorn and Sal Volatile, a doctor was ſent for, and meſſengers were diſpatched every way; amongſt the reſt, one was ſent to enquire at the lodgings of his ſuppoſed antagoniſt.

The ſervant, hearing that his maſter was alive and well above ſtairs, ran up eagerly to acquaint him with the dreadful ſituation in which he left his miſerable lady at home, and likewiſe with the occaſion of all her

reſs, ſaying, that his lady had been at her bro-
and had there heard that his honour was killed
el by Captain Booth.

colonel ſmiled at this account, and bid the ſer-
ake haſte back to contradict it.—And then
r to Booth, he ſaid, 'Was there ever ſuch an-
fellow as this brother of mine? I thought in-
his behaviour was ſomewhat odd at the time.
poſe he overheard me whiſper that I would
you ſatisfaction, and thence concluded, we
together with a deſign of tilting.—D—n the
w, I begin to grow heartily ſick of him, and
I could get well rid of him without cutting his
t, which I ſometimes apprehend he will inſiſt
y doing, as a return for my getting him made
itenant-colonel.'

lſt theſe two gentlemen were commenting on
iracter of the third, Amelia and her company
d, and all preſently came up ſtairs, not only
ldren, but the two ladies, laden with trinkets
ey had been come from a fair. Amelia, who
en highly delighted all the morning with the
e pleaſure which her children enjoyed when ſhe
lonel James with her huſband, and perceived
ſt manifeſt marks of that reconciliation, which
w had been ſo long and ſo earneſtly wiſhed by
became ſo tranſported with joy that her happi-
is ſcarce capable of addition. Exerciſe had
l her face with vermillion; and the higheſt
umour had ſo ſweetened every feature, and a
w of ſpirits had ſo lightened up her bright
hat ſhe was all a blaze of beauty. She ſeemed,
, as Milton ſublimely deſcribes Eve,

—— adorned
h what all Earth or Heaven could beſtow
nake her amiable ——

e was in all her ſteps, Heaven in her eye,
r'ry geſture, dignity, and love.

n Waller ſweetly, though leſs ſublimely, ſings

Sweetneſs, truth, and every grace,
Which time and uſe are wont to teach,
The eye may in a moment reach,
And read diſtinctly in her face.

Or to mention one poet more, and him of all the ſweeteſt, ſhe ſeemed to be the very perſon of whom Suckling wrote the following lines, where, ſpeaking of Cupid, he ſays,

—All his lovely looks, his pleaſing fires,
All his ſweet motions, all his taking ſmiles,
All that awakes, all that inflames deſires,
All that ſweetly commands, all that beguiles,
He does into one pair of eyes convey,
And there begs leave that he himſelf may ſtay.

Such was Amelia at this time when ſhe entered the room, and having paid her reſpects to the colonel, ſhe went up to her huſband, and cried, 'O, my dear! 'never were any creatures ſo happy as your little 'things have been this whole morning; and all ow-'ing to my lord's goodneſs; ſure never was any thing 'ſo good-natured and ſo generous?'—She then made the children produce their preſents, the value of which amounted to a pretty large ſum; for there was a gold watch amongſt the trinkets that coſt above twenty guineas.

Inſtead of diſcovering ſo much ſatisfaction on this occaſion as Amelia expected, Booth very gravely anſwered, 'And pray, my dear, how are we to repay 'all theſe obligations to his lordſhip?'—'How can you 'aſk ſo ſtrange a queſtion?' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'how 'little do you know of the ſoul of generoſity (for 'ſure my couſin deſerves that name) when you call 'a few little trinkets given to children, an obliga-'tion?'—'Indeed, my dear,' cries Amelia, 'I would 'have ſtopped his hand, if it had been poſſible; nay, 'I was forced at laſt abſolutely to refuſe, or I be-'lieve he would have laid a hundred pound out on 'the children: for I never ſaw any one ſo fond of 'children, which convinces me he is one of the beſt 'of men; but I aſk your pardon, colonel,' ſaid ſhe, turning

turning to him, 'I ſhould not entertain you with theſe 'ſubjects; yet I know you have goodneſs enough to 'excuſe the folly of a mother.'

The colonel made a very low aſſenting bow; and ſoon after they all ſat down to a ſmall repaſt; for the colonel had promiſed Booth to dine with him when they firſt came home together; and what he had ſince heard from his own houſe gave him ſtill leſs inclination than ever to repair thither.

But beſides both theſe, there was a third and ſtronger inducement to him to paſs the day with his friend; and this was the deſire of paſſing it with his friend's wife. When the colonel had firſt ſeen Amelia in France, ſhe was but juſt recovered from a conſumptive habit, and looked pale and thin; beſides, his engagements with Miſs Bath at that time took total poſſeſſion of him, and guarded his heart from the impreſſions of another woman; and when he had dined with her in town, the vexations through which ſhe had lately paſſed had ſomewhat deadened her beauty; beſides he was then engaged, as we have ſeen, in a very warm purſuit of a new miſtreſs; but now he had no ſuch impediment: for though the reader hath juſt before ſeen his warm declarations of a paſſion for Miſs Matthews, yet it may be remembered that he had been in poſſeſſion of her for above a fortnight; and one of the happy properties of this kind of paſſion is, that it can with equal violence love half a dozen, or half a ſcore, different objects at one and the ſame time.

But indeed ſuch were the charms now diſplayed by Amelia, of which we endeavoured above to draw ſome faint reſemblance, that perhaps no other beauty could have ſecured him from their influence; and here, to confeſs a truth in his favour, however the grave, or rather the hypocritical part of mankind may cenſure it, I am firmly perſuaded that to withdraw admiration from exquiſite beauty, or to feel no delight in gazing at it, is as impoſſible as to feel no warmth from the moſt ſcorching rays of the ſun. To run away is all that is in our power: and yet in the former caſe, if it muſt be allowed we have the power of running

away, it muſt be allowed alſo, that it requires the ſtrongeſt reſolution to execute it: for when, as Dryden ſays,

All paradiſe is opened in a face,

how natural is the deſire of going thither! and how difficult to quit the lovely proſpect!

And yet, however difficult this may be, my young readers, it is abſolutely neceſſary, and that immediately too: flatter not yourſelves that fire will not ſcorch as well as warm, and the longer we ſtay within its reach, the more we ſhall burn. The admiration of a beautiful woman, though the wife of our deareſt friend, may at firſt perhaps be innocent; but let us not flatter ourſelves it will always remain ſo; deſire is ſure to ſucceed; and wiſhes, hopes, deſigns, with a long train of miſchiefs, tread cloſe at our heels. In affairs of this kind we may moſt properly apply the well-known remark of *nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus*. It fares indeed with us on this occaſion, as with the unwary traveller in ſome parts of Arabia the deſert, whom the treacherous ſands inperceptibly betray 'till he is overwhelmed and loſt. In both caſes the only ſafety is by withdrawing our feet the very firſt moment we perceive them ſliding.

This digreſſion may appear impertinent to ſome readers; we could not, however, avoid the opportunity of offering the above hints; ſince of all paſſions there is none againſt which we ſhould ſo ſtrongly fortify ourſelves as this, which is generally called love: for no other lays before us, eſpecially in the tumultuous days of youth, ſuch ſweet, ſuch ſtrong, and almoſt irreſiſtible temptations; none hath produced in private life ſuch fatal and lamentable tragedies; and what is worſt of all, there is none to whoſe poiſon and infatuation the beſt of minds are ſo liable. Ambition ſcarce ever produces any evil but when it reigns in cruel and ſavage boſoms; and avarice ſeldom flouriſhes at all but in the baſeſt and pooreſt ſoil. Love, on the contrary, ſprouts uſually up in the richeſt and nobleſt minds; but there, unleſs nicely watched, pruned, and cultivated, and carefully kept clear of thoſe vicious

vicious weeds which are too apt to ſurround it, it branches forth into wildneſs and diſorder, produces nothing deſirable, but choaks up and kills whatever is good and noble in the mind where it ſo abounds. In ſhort, to drop the allegory, not only tenderneſs and good-nature, but bravery, generoſity, and every virtue are often made the inſtruments of effecting the moſt atrocious purpoſes of this all-ſubduing tyrant.

CHAP. II.

Which will not appear, we preſume, unnatural to all married readers.

IF the table of poor Booth afforded but an indifferent repaſt to the colonel's hunger, here was moſt excellent entertainment of a much higher kind. The colonel began now to wonder within himſelf at his not having before diſcovered ſuch incomparable beauty and excellence. This wonder was indeed ſo natural, that, leſt it ſhould ariſe likewiſe in the reader, we thought proper to give the ſolution of it in the preceding chapter.

During the firſt two hours, the colonel ſcarce ever had his eyes off from Amelia; for he was taken by ſurprize, and his heart was gone before he ſuſpected himſelf to be in any danger. His mind, however, no ſooner ſuggeſted a certain ſecret to him, than it ſuggeſted ſome degree of prudence to him at the ſame time; and the knowledge that he had thoughts to conceal, and the care of concealing them, had birth at one and the ſame inſtant. During the reſidue of the day, therefore, he grew more circumſpect, and contented himſelf with now and then ſtealing a look by chance, eſpecially as the more than ordinary gravity of Booth made him fear that his former behaviour had betrayed to Booth's obſervation the great and ſudden liking he had conceived for his wife, even before he had obſerved it in himſelf.

Amelia continued the whole day in the higheſt ſpirits and higheſt good-humour imaginable; never once remarking that appearance of diſcontent in her huſ-

band, of which the colonel had taken notice; ſo much more quick ſighted, as we have ſomewhere elſe hinted, is guilt than innocence. Whether Booth had in reality made any ſuch obſervations on the colonel's behaviour as he had ſuſpected, we will not undertake to determine; yet ſo far may be material to ſay, as we can with ſufficient certainty, that the change in Booth's behaviour that day, from what was uſual with him, was remarkable enough. None of his former vivacity appeared in his converſation; and his countenance was altered from being the picture of ſweetneſs and good-humour, not indeed to ſourneſs or moroſeneſs, but to gravity and melancholy.

Though the colonel's ſuſpicion had the effect which we have mentioned on his behaviour, yet it could not perſuade him to depart. In ſhort, he ſat in his chair, as if confined to it by enchantment, ſtealing looks now and then, and humouring his growing paſſion, without having command enough over his limbs to carry him out of the room, till decency at laſt forced him to put an end to his prepoſterous viſit. When the huſband and wife were left alone together, the latter reſumed the ſubject of her children, and gave Booth a particular narrative of all that had paſſed at his Lordſhip's, which he, tho' ſomething had certainly diſconcerted him, affected to receive with all the pleaſure he could; and this affectation, however awkwardly he acted his part, paſſed very well on Amelia: for ſhe could not well conceive a diſpleaſure, of which ſhe had not the leaſt hint of any cauſe; and indeed at a time, when, from his reconciliation with *James*, ſhe imagined her huſband to be entirely and perfectly happy.

The greateſt part of that night Booth paſſed awake; and if, during the reſidue he might be ſaid to ſleep, he could ſcarce be ſaid to enjoy repoſe; his eyes were no ſooner cloſed, than he was purſued and haunted by the moſt frightful and terrifying dreams, which threw him into ſo reſtleſs a condition, that he ſoon diſturbed his Amelia, and greatly alarmed her with apprehenſions that he had been ſeized by ſome dreadful diſ*eaſe, though* he had not the leaſt ſymptoms of a fever

by any extraordinary heat, or any other indication, but was rather colder than uſual.

As Booth aſſured his wife that he was very well, but found no inclination to ſleep, ſhe likewiſe bid adieu to her ſlumbers, and attempted to entertain him with her converſation. Upon which his lordſhip occurred as the firſt topic; and ſhe repeated to him all the ſtories which ſhe had heard from Mrs. Elliſon of the peer's goodneſs to his ſiſter, and his nephew and niece. 'It is impoſſible, my dear,' ſays ſhe, 'to 'deſcribe their fondneſs for their uncle, which is to 'me an inconteſtable ſign of a parent's goodneſs.'— In this manner ſhe ran on for ſeveral minutes, concluding at laſt, that it was pity ſo very few had ſuch generous minds joined to immenſe fortunes.

Booth, inſtead of making a direct anſwer to what Amelia had ſaid, cried coldly, 'But do you think, 'my dear, it was right to accept all thoſe expenſive 'toys which the children brought home? And I aſk 'you again, what return we are to make for theſe 'obligations?'

'Indeed, my dear,' cries Amelia, 'you ſee this 'matter in too ſerious a light. Though I am the laſt 'perſon in the world who would leſſen his lordſhip's 'goodneſs (indeed I ſhall always think we are both 'infinitely obliged to him) yet ſure you muſt allow 'the expence to be a mere trifle to ſuch a vaſt fortune. 'As for return, his own benevolence, in the ſatisfac-'tion it receives, more than repays itſelf, and I am 'convinced he expects no other.'

'Very well, my dear,' cries Booth, 'you ſhall 'have it your way: I muſt confeſs I never yet ſaw 'any reaſon to blame your diſcernment; and perhaps 'I have been in the wrong to give myſelf ſo much 'uneaſineſs on this account.'

'Uneaſineſs! child,' ſaid Amelia eagerly. 'Good 'Heavens! hath this made you uneaſy?'

'I do own it hath,' anſwered Booth; 'and it hath 'been the only cauſe of breaking my repoſe.'

'Why then I wiſh,' cries Amelia, 'all the things 'had been at the devil before ever the children had 'ſeen them; and whatever I may think myſelf, I

'promiſe

'promiſe you, they ſhall never more accept the value 'of a farthing—If upon this occaſion, I have been the 'cauſe of your uneaſineſs, you will do me the juſtice 'to believe that I was totally innocent.'

At thoſe words Booth caught her in his arms, and with the tendereſt embrace, emphatically repeating the word innocent, cried—'Heaven forbid I ſhould 'think otherwiſe. O thou art the beſt of creatures 'that ever bleſſed a man.'

'Well but,' ſaid ſhe ſmiling—'Do confeſs, my dear, 'the truth; I promiſe you, I won't blame you nor 'diſeſteem you for it; but is not pride really at the 'bottom of this fear of an obligation?'

'Perhaps it may,' anſwered he, 'or if you will, 'you may call it fear. I own I am afraid of obliga-'tions as the worſt kind of debts; for I have gene-'rally obſerved thoſe who confer them expect to be 'repaid ten thouſand fold.'

Here ended all that is material of their diſcourſe; and a little time afterwards, they both fell faſt aſleep in one another's arms: from which time Booth had no more reſtleſſneſs, nor any further perturbation in his dreams.

Their repoſe, however, had been ſo much diſturbed in the former part of the night, that as it was very late before they enjoyed that ſweet ſleep I have juſt mentioned, they lay in bed the next day till noon, when they both roſe with the utmoſt chearfulneſs; and, while Amelia beſtirred herſelf in the affairs of her family, Booth went to viſit the wounded colonel.

He found that gentleman ſtill proceeding very faſt in his recovery, with which he was more pleaſed than he had reaſon to be with his reception; for the colonel received him very coldly indeed, and when Booth told him he had received perfect ſatisfaction from his brother, Bath erected his head, and anſwered with a ſneer, 'Very well, Sir, if you think theſe matters can 'be ſo made up, d—n me, if it is any buſineſs of 'mine. My dignity hath not been injured.'

'No one, I believe,' cries Booth, 'dare injure it.'—

'You believe ſo?' ſaid the colonel. 'I think, Sir, 'you might be aſſured of it; but this, at leaſt, you

'may be assured of, that if any man did, I would tum-
'ble him down the precipice of hell, d—n me; that
'you may be assured of.'

As Booth found the colonel in this disposition, he had no great inclination to lengthen out his visit, nor did the colonel himself seem to desire it; so he soon returned back to his Amelia, whom he found performing the office of a cook, with as much pleasure as a fine lady generally enjoys in dressing herself out for a ball.

CHAP. III.

In which the History looks a little backwards.

BEFORE we proceed farther in our history, we shall recount a short scene to our reader which passed between Amelia and Mrs. Ellison whilst Booth was on his visit to colonel Bath. We have already observed, that Amelia had conceived an extraordinary affection for Mrs. Bennet, which still increased every time she saw her: she thought she discovered something wonderfully good and gentle in her countenance and disposition, and was very desirous of knowing her whole history.

She had a very short interview with that lady this morning in Mrs. Ellison's apartment. As soon therefore as Mrs. Bennet was gone, Amelia acquainted Mrs. Ellison with the good opinion she had conceived of her friend, and likewise with her curiosity to know her story: 'For there must be something uncommon-
'ly good,' said she, 'in one who can so truly mourn
'for a husband above three years after his death.'

'O,' cries Mrs. Ellison, 'to be sure the world must
'allow her to have been one of the best of wives.
'And, indeed, upon the whole she is a good sort of
'woman; and what I like her the best for is a strong
'resemblance that she bears to yourself in the form
'of her person, and still more in her voice. But for
'my own part, I know nothing remarkable in her
'fortune, unless what I have told you, that she was
'the daughter of a clergyman, had little or no for-
'tune, and married a poor parson for love, who left

her

'her in the utmoſt diſtreſs. If you pleaſe, I will ſhow 'you a letter which ſhe writ to me at that time, 'though I inſiſt upon your promiſe never to mention 'it to her; indeed, you will be the firſt perſon I ever 'ſhowed it to.' She then opened her 'ſcrutore, and taking out the letter delivered it to Amelia, ſaying, 'There, madam, is, I believe, as fine a picture of diſtreſs as can well be drawn.'

'Dear Madam,

'AS I have no other friend on earth but yourſelf, 'I hope you will pardon my writing to you at this 'ſeaſon; though I do not know that you can relieve 'my diſtreſſes, or if you can, have I any pretence to 'expect that you ſhould. My poor dear, O Heavens! '—my——lies dead in the houſe, and after I had 'procured ſufficient to bury him, a ſet of ruffians 'have entered my houſe, ſeized all I have, have ſeiz-'ed his dear, dear corpſe, and threaten to deny it 'burial. For, Heaven's ſake, ſend me, at leaſt, ſome 'advice: little Tommy ſtands now by me, crying for 'bread, which I have not to give him.—I can ſay no 'more than that I am,

'Your moſt diſtreſſed humble ſervant,

'M. Bennet.'

Amelia read the letter over twice, and then returning it, with tears in her eyes, aſked how the poor creature could poſſibly get through ſuch diſtreſs?

'You may depend upon it, madam,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'the moment I read this account, I poſted 'away immediately to the lady. As to the ſeizing 'the body, that I found was a mere bugbear; but 'all the reſt was literally true. I ſent immediately 'for the ſame gentleman that I recommended to Mr. 'Booth, left the care of burying the corpſe to him, 'and brought my friend and her little boy immedi-'ately away to my own houſe, where ſhe remained 'ſome months in the moſt miſerable condition. I 'then prevailed with her to retire into the country, 'and procured her a lodging with a friend at St. Ed-'munſbury, the air and gaiety of which place by 'degrees recovered her; and ſhe returned in about a twelve-

'twelvemonth to town, as well, I think, as ſhe is 'at preſent.'

'I am almoſt afraid to aſk,' cries Amelia; 'and 'yet I long methinks to know what is become of the 'poor little boy.'

'He hath been dead,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'a little 'more than half a year; and the mother lamented 'him at firſt almoſt as much as ſhe did her huſband; 'but I found it indeed rather an eaſier matter to com-'fort her, though I ſat up with her near a fortnight 'upon the latter occaſion.'

'You are a good creature,' ſaid Amelia, 'and I 'love you dearly.'

'Alas! madam,' cries ſhe, 'what could I have 'done, if it had not been for the goodneſs of that 'beſt of men, my noble couſin! His lordſhip no 'ſooner heard of the widow's diſtreſs from me, than 'he immedietely ſettled one hundred and fifty pounds 'a-year upon her during life.'

'Well! how noble, how generous was that!' ſaid Amelia. 'I declare I begin to love your couſin, Mrs. 'Elliſon.'

'And I declare if you do,' anſwered ſhe, 'there 'is no love loſt, I verily believe: if you had heard 'what I heard him ſay yeſterday behind you 'back.'——

'Why, what did he ſay, Mrs. Elliſon?' cries Amelia.

'He ſaid,' anſwered the other, 'that you was the 'fineſt woman his eyes ever beheld.—Ah! it is in 'vain to wiſh, and yet I cannot help wiſhing too.— 'O, Mrs. Booth! if you had been a ſingle woman, I 'firmly believe I could have made you the happieſt 'in the world. And I ſincerely think, I never ſaw 'a woman who deſerved it more.'

'I am obliged to you, madam,' cries Amelia, 'for 'your good opinion; but I really look on myſelf al-'ready as the happieſt woman in the world. Our 'circumſtances, it is true, might have been a little 'more fortunate; but, O my dear Mrs. Elliſon, what 'fortune can be put in the balance with ſuch a huſ-'band as mine?'

'I am

'I am afraid, dear madam,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon, 'you would not hold the ſcale fairly.—I acknowledge, indeed, Mr. Booth is a very pretty gentleman. Heaven forbid I ſhould endeavour to leſſen him in your opinion; yet, if I was to be brought to confeſſion, I could not help ſaying, I ſee where the ſuperiority lies, and that the men have more reaſon to envy Mr. Booth, than the women have to envy his lady.'

'Nay, I will not bear this,' replied Amelia. 'You will forfeit all my love, if you have the leaſt diſreſpectful opinion of my huſband.—You do not know him, Mrs. Elliſon: he is the beſt, the kindeſt, the worthieſt of all his ſex. I have obſerved indeed once or twice before, that you have taken ſome diſlike to him. I cannot conceive for what reaſon. If he hath ſaid or done any thing to diſoblige you, I am ſure I can juſtly acquit him of deſign. His extreme vivacity makes him ſometimes a little too heedleſs; but, I am convinced, a more innocent heart, or one more void of offence, was never in a human boſom.'

'Nay, if you grow ſerious,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'I have done. How is it poſſible you ſhould ſuſpect I had taken any diſlike to a man, to whom I have always ſhewn ſo perfect a regard! but, to ſay I think him, or almoſt any other man in the world, worthy of yourſelf, is not within my power with truth. And ſince you force the confeſſion from me, I declare, I think ſuch beauty, ſuch ſenſe, and ſuch goodneſs united, might aſpire, without vanity, to the arms of any monarch in Europe.'

'Alas! my dear Mrs. Elliſon,' anſwered Amelia, 'do you think happineſs and a crown ſo cloſely united? How many miſerable women have lain in the arms of kings?—Indeed, Mrs. Elliſon, if I had all the merit you compliment me with, I ſhould think it all fully rewarded with ſuch a man as, I thank Heaven, hath fallen to my lot; nor would I, upon my ſoul, exchange that lot with any queen in the univerſe.'

'Well,

'Well, there are enow of our ſex,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'to keep you in countenance; but I ſhall never 'forget the beginning of a ſong of Mr. Congreve's, 'that my huſband was ſo fond of, that he was always 'ſinging it.'

Love's but a frailty of the mind,
When 'tis not with ambition join'd.

'Love without intereſt makes but an unſavoury diſh 'in my opinion.'

'And, pray, how long hath this been your opinion?' ſaid Amelia, ſmiling.

'Ever ſince I was born.' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon, 'at leaſt, ever ſince I can remember.'

'And have you never,' ſaid Amelia, 'deviated 'from this generous way of thinking?'

'Never once,' anſwered the other, 'in the whole 'courſe of my life.'

'O Mrs. Elliſon! Mrs. Elliſon!' cries Amelia, 'why do we ever blame thoſe who are diſingenuous in 'confeſſing their faults, when we are ſo often aſhamed 'to own ourſelves in the right. Some women now, in 'my ſituation, would be angry that you had not made 'confidantes of them; but I never deſire to know 'more of the ſecrets of others than they are pleaſed 'to entruſt me with. You muſt believe, however, 'that I ſhould not have given you theſe hints of my 'knowing all, if I had diſapproved of your choice. 'On the contrary, I aſſure you, I highly approve it. 'The gentility he wants, it will be eaſy in your power 'to procure for him; and as for his good qualities, I 'will myſelf be bound for them: and I make not the 'leaſt doubt, as you have owned to me yourſelf, that 'you have placed your affections on him, you will be 'one of the happieſt women in the world.'

'Upon my honour,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, very gravely, 'I do not underſtand one word of what you 'mean.'

'Upon my honour, you aſtoniſh me,' ſaid Amelia, 'but I have done.'

'Nay then,' ſaid the other, 'I inſiſt upon knowing 'what you mean.'

'Why,

'Why, what can I mean,' anſwered Amelia, 'but 'your marriage with Serjeant Atkinſon?'

'With Serjeant Atkinſon!' cries Mrs. Elliſon eagerly: 'my marriage with a ſerjeant!'

'Well, with Mr. Atkinſon then, Captain Atkin-'ſon, if you pleaſe; for ſo I hope to ſee him.'

'And have you really no better opinion of me,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'than to imagine me capable of ſuch 'condeſcenſion? What have I done, dear Mrs. Booth, 'to deſerve ſo low a place in your eſteem? I find, in-'deed, as Solomon ſays, *Women ought to watch the 'door of their lips.* How little did I imagine that a 'little harmleſs freedom in diſcourſe could perſuade 'any one that I could entertain a ſerious intention 'of diſgracing my family! for of a very good fami-'ly am I come, I aſſure you, madam, though I 'now let lodgings. Few of my lodgers, I believe, 'ever came of a better.'

'If I have offended you, madam,' ſaid Amelia, 'I am very ſorry, and aſk your pardon; but beſides 'what I heard from yourſelf, Mr. Booth told me.'

'O yes,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon, 'Mr. Booth, I 'know, is a very good friend of mine.—Indeed, I 'know you better than to think it could be your 'own ſuſpicion.—I am very much obliged to Mr. 'Booth truely.'

'Nay,' cries Amelia, 'the ſerjeant himſelf is in 'fault; for Mr. Booth, I am poſitive, only repeated 'what he had from him.'

'Impudent coxcomb!' cries Mrs. Elliſon. 'I ſhall 'know how to keep ſuch fellows at a proper diſtance 'for the future—I will tell you, dear madam, all that 'happened. When I roſe in the morning, I found the 'fellow waiting in the entry; and as you had expreſſed 'ſome regard for him as your foſter-brother, nay, he 'is a very genteel fellow that I muſt own, I ſcolded 'my maid for not ſhowing him into my little back-'room; and I then aſked him to walk into the par-'lour. Could I have imagined he would have con-'ſtrued ſuch little civility into an encouragement.'

'Nay, I will have juſtice done to my poor brother

'too,'

'too,' said Amelia. 'I myself have seen you give 'him much greater encouragement than that.'

'Well, perhaps I have,' said Mrs. Ellison. 'I 'have been always too unguarded in my speech, and 'cannot answer for all I have said.' She then began to change her note, and with an affected laugh, turned all into ridicule; and soon afterwards, the two ladies separated, both in apparent good-humour; and Amelia went about those domestic offices, in which Mr. Booth found her engaged at the end of the preceding chapter.

CHAP. IV.

Containing a very extraordinary incident.

IN the afternoon, Mr. Booth, with Amelia and her children, went to refresh themselves in the Park. The conversation now turned on what passed in the morning with Mrs. Ellison, the latter part of the dialogue, I mean, recorded in the last chapter. Amelia told her husband, that Mrs. Ellison so strongly denied all intentions to marry the serjeant, that she had convinced her the poor fellow was under an error, and had mistaken a little too much levity for serious encouragement; and concluded, by desiring Booth not to jest with her any more on that subject.

Booth burst into a laugh, at what his wife said. 'My dear creature,' said he, 'how easy is thy ho-'nesty and simplicity to be imposed on! How little 'dost thou guess at the art and falsehood of women! 'I knew a young lady, who, against her father's con-'sent, was married to a brother officer of mine: and 'as I often used to walk with her (for I knew her fa-'ther intimately well) she would of her own accord 'take frequent occasion to ridicule and villify her hus-'band (for so he was at the time) and expressed great 'wonder and indignation at the report which she allow-'ed to prevail, that she should condescend ever to look 'at such a fellow, with any other design than of laugh-'ing at, and despising him. The marriage after-'wards became publicly owned, and the lady was re-'putably brought to bed. Since which, I have often

'seen

'seen her; nor hath she ever appeared to be in the 'least ashamed of what she had formerly said, though, 'indeed, I believe she hates me heartily for having 'heard it.'

'But for what reason,' cries Amelia, 'should she 'deny a fact, when she must be so certain of our dis-'covering it, and that immediately?'

'I cannot answer what end she may propose,' said Booth. 'Sometimes one would be almost persuaded 'that there was a pleasure in lying itself. But this I 'am certain, that I would believe the honest serjeant 'on his bare word, sooner than I would fifty Mrs. 'Ellisons on oath. I am convinced he would not 'have said what he did to me, without the strongest 'encouragement; and, I think after what we have 'been both witnesses to, it requires no great confi-'dence in his veracity, to give him an unlimited cre-'dit with regard to the lady's behaviour.'

To this Amelia made no reply; and they discoursed of other matters during the remainder of a very pleasant walk.

When they returned home, Amelia was surprised to find an appearance of disorder in her apartment. Several of the trinkets which his lordship had given the children lay about the room; and a suit of her own clothes, which she had left in her drawers, was now displayed upon the bed.

She immediately summoned her little girl up stairs, who, as she plainly perceived the moment she came up with a candle, had half cried her eyes out: for though the girl had opened the door to them, as it was almost dark, she had not taken any notice of this phænomenon in her countenance.

The girl now fell down upon her knees, and cried, —'For Heaven's sake, madam, do not be angry with 'me. Indeed, I was left alone in the house; and 'hearing somebody knock at the door, I opened it, 'I am sure thinking no harm. I did not know but 'it might have been you, or my master, or madam 'Ellison; and immediately as I did the rogue burst 'in and ran directly up stairs, and what he hath rob-'bed you of I cannot tell; but I am sure I could not

'help

'help it: for he was a great ſwinging man, with a 'piſtol in each hand; and, if I had dared to call 'out, to be ſure he would have killed me. I am ſure 'I was never in ſuch a fright in my born days, where-'of I am hardly come to myſelf yet. I believe he is 'ſomewhere about the houſe yet; for I never ſaw 'him go out.'

Amelia diſcovered ſome little alarm at this narrative, but much leſs than many other ladies would have ſhown: for a fright is, I believe, ſome time laid hold of as an opportunity of diſcloſing ſeveral charms peculiar to that occaſion. And which, as Mr. Addiſon ſays of certain virtues,

——— ſhun the day, and lie concealed
In the ſmooth ſeaſons, and the calms of life.

Booth having opened the window, and ſummoned in two chairmen to his aſſiſtance, proceeded to ſearch the houſe; but all to no purpoſe; the thief was flown, though the poor girl, in her ſtate of terror, had not ſeen him eſcape.

But now a circumſtance appeared which greatly ſurpriſed both Booth and Amelia; indeed, I believe it will have the ſame effect on the reader; and this was that the thief had taken nothing with him. He had indeed tumbled over all Booth's and Amelia's clothes, and the children's toys, but had left all behind him.

Amelia was ſcarce more pleaſed than aſtoniſhed at this diſcovery, and re-examined the girl aſſuring her of an abſolute pardon, if ſhe confeſſed the truth, but grievouſly threatening her if ſhe was found guilty of the leaſt falſehood. 'As for a thief, child,' ſays ſhe, 'that is certainly not true; you have had ſomebody 'with you, to whom you have been ſhowing the 'things; therefore tell me plainly who it was.'

The girl proteſted in the ſolemneſt manner that ſhe knew not the perſon; but as to ſome circumſtances ſhe began to vary a little from her firſt account, particularly as to the piſtols; concerning which, being ſtrictly examined by Booth, ſhe at laſt cried,—'To 'be ſure, Sir, he muſt have had piſtols about him. And inſtead of perſiſting in his having ruſhed in up

her, ſhe now confeſſed, that he had aſked at the door for her maſter and miſtreſs; and that at his deſire ſhe had ſhown him up ſtairs, where he at firſt ſaid he would ſtay till their return home; 'But, indeed,' cried ſhe, 'I thought no harm; for he looked like a 'gentleman-like ſort of a man. And, indeed, ſo I 'thought he was for a good while, whereof he ſat 'down and behaved himſelf very civilly, till he ſaw 'ſome of maſter's and miſs's things upon the cheſt of 'drawer's; whereof he cried, 'Heyday! what's here?' 'and then he fell to tumbling about the things like 'any mad. Then I thinks, thinks I to myſelf, to 'be ſure he is a highwayman, whereof I did not dare 'to ſpeak to him: for I knew madam Eliſon and 'her maid was gone out, and what could ſuch a poor 'girl as I do againſt a great ſtrong man? and be-'ſides, thinks I, to be ſure he hath got piſtols about 'him, though I cannot indeed (that I will not do for 'the world) take my Bible-Oath that I ſaw any; yet 'to be ſure he would have ſoon pulled them out, and 'ſhot me dead, if I had ventured to have ſaid any 'thing to offend him.'

'I know not what to make of this,' cries Booth. 'The poor girl, I verily believe, ſpeaks to the beſt of 'her knowledge. A thief it could not be; for he 'hath not taken the leaſt thing; and it is plain he 'had the girl's watch in his hand.—If it had been 'a bailiff, ſurely he would have ſtaid till our return. 'I can conceive no other from the girl's account, 'than that it muſt have been ſome madman.'—

'O good Sir,' ſaid the girl, 'now you mention it, if 'he was not a thief, to be ſure he muſt have been a 'madman; for indeed he looked, and behaved him-'ſelf too, very much like a madman: for now I re-'member it, he talked to himſelf, and ſaid many 'ſtrange kind of words, that I did not underſtand. 'Indeed, he looked altogether as I have ſeen people 'in Bedlam; beſides, if he was not a madman, what 'good could it do him to throw the things all about 'the room in ſuch a manner? and he ſaid ſomething 'too about my maſter, juſt before he went down ſtairs: 'I was in ſuch a fright, I cannot remember particu-

'larly;

'larly; but I am ſure they were very ill words: he 'ſaid he would do for him; I am ſure he ſaid that, 'and other wicked bad words too, if I could but 'think of them.'

'Upon my word,' ſaid Booth, 'this is the moſt 'probable conjecture; but ſtill I am puzzled to con-'ceive who it ſhould be; for I have no madman to 'my knowledge of my acquaintance; and it ſeems, 'as the girl ſays, he aſked for me.' He then turned to the child, and aſked her if ſhe was certain of that circumſtance.

The poor maid, after a little heſitation, anſwered, 'Indeed, Sir, I cannot be very poſitive; for the fright 'he threw me into afterwards drove every thing al-'moſt out of my mind.'

'Well, whatever he was,' cries Amelia, 'I am 'glad the conſequence is no worſe; but let this be a 'warning to you, little Betty, and teach you to take 'more care for the future. If ever you ſhould be 'left alone in the houſe again, be ſure to let no per-'ſons in, without firſt looking out of the window, 'and ſeeing who they are. I promiſed not to chide 'you any more on this occaſion, and I will keep my 'word; but it is very plain you deſired this perſon 'to walk up into our apartment, which was very 'wrong in our abſence.'

Betty was going to anſwer—but Amelia would not let her, ſaying, 'Don't attempt to excuſe yourſelf; 'for I mortally hate a liar, and can forgive any fault 'ſooner than falſehood.'

The poor girl then ſubmitted; and now Amelia with her aſſiſtance began to replace all things in their order; and little Emily, hugging her watch with great fondneſs, declared ſhe would never part with it any more.

Thus ended this odd adventure, not entirely to the ſatisfaction of Booth: for, beſides his curioſity, which, when thoroughly rouſed, is a very troubleſome paſſion, he had, as is, I believe, uſual with all perſons in his circumſtances, ſeveral doubts and apprehenſions of he knew not what. Indeed, fear is never more uneaſy, than when it doth not certainly know its object: for

on ſuch occaſions the mind is ever employed in raiſing a thouſand bugbears and fantoms, much more dreadful than any realities, and like children, when they tell tales of hobgoblins, ſeems induſtrious in terrifying itſelf.

CHAP. V.

Containing ſome matters not very unnatural.

MATTERS were ſcarce ſooner reduced into order and decency, than a violent knocking was heard at the door, ſuch indeed as would have perſuaded any one not accuſtomed to the ſound, that the madman was returned in the higheſt ſpring-tide of his fury.

Inſtead, however, of ſo diſagreeable an appearance, a very fine lady preſently came into the room, no other indeed than Mrs. James herſelf; for ſhe was reſolved to ſhow Amelia, by the ſpeedy return of her viſit, how unjuſt all her accuſations had been of any failure in the duties of friendſhip; ſhe had moreover another reaſon to accelerate this viſit, and that was, to congratulate her friend on the event of the duel between Colonel Bath and Mr. Booth.

The lady had ſo well profited by Mrs. Booth's remonſtrance, that ſhe had now no more of that ſtiffneſs and formality which ſhe had worn on a former occaſion. On the contrary, ſhe now behaved with the utmoſt freedom and good-humour, and made herſelf ſo very agreeable, that Amelia was highly pleaſed and delighted with her company.

An incident happened during this viſit that may appear to ſome too inconſiderable in itſelf to be recorded; and yet, as it certainly produced a very ſtrong conſequence in the mind of Mr. Booth, we cannot prevail on ourſelves to paſs it by.

Little Emily, who was preſent in the room while Mrs. James was there, as ſhe ſtood near that lady, happened to be playing with her watch, which ſhe was ſo greatly overjoyed had eſcaped ſafe from the madman. Mrs. James, who expreſſed great fondneſs for the child, deſired to ſee the watch, which ſhe commended as the pretieſt of the kind ſhe had ever ſeen.

Amelia caught eager hold of this opportunity to ſpread the praiſes of her benefactor. She preſently acquainted Mrs. James with the donor's name, and ran on with great encomiums on his lordſhip's goodneſs, and particularly on his generoſity. To which Mrs. James anſwered, 'O certainly, madam, his 'lordſhip hath univerſally the character of being ex-'tremely generous—where he likes.'

In uttering theſe words, ſhe laid a very ſtrong emphaſis on the three laſt monoſyllables, accompanying them at the ſame time with a very ſagacious look, a very ſignificant leer, and a great flirt with her fan.

The greateſt genius the world hath ever produced, obſerves, in one of his moſt excellent plays, that

—— Trifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations ſtrong
As proofs of holy writ.

That Mr. Booth began to be poſſeſſed by this worſt of fiends admits, I think, no longer doubt; for at this ſpeech of Mrs. James, he immediately turned pale, and, from a high degree of chearfulneſs, was all on a ſudden ſtruck dumb, ſo that he ſpoke not another word till Mrs. James left the room.

The moment that lady drove from the door, Mrs. Elliſon came up ſtairs. She entered the room with a laugh, and very plentifully rallied both Booth and Amelia concerning the madman, of which ſhe had received a full account below ſtairs; and at laſt aſked Amelia, if ſhe could not gueſs who it was; but, without receiving an anſwer, went on, ſaying, 'for my 'own part, I fancy it muſt be ſome lover of your's; 'ſome perſon that hath ſeen you, and ſo is run mad 'with love. Indeed, I ſhould not wonder if all man-'kind were to do the ſame. La! Mr. Booth, what 'makes you grave? why you are as melancholy as if 'you had been robbed in earneſt. Upon my word, 'though to be ſerious, it is a ſtrange ſtory; and as 'the girl tells it, I know not what to make of it. 'Perhaps it might be ſome rogue that intended to rob 'the houſe, and his heart failed him; yet, even that 'would be very extraordinary. What, did you loſe 'nothing, madam?'

'Nothing at all,' anſwered Amelia. 'He did not 'even take the child's watch.'

'Well, captain,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'I hope you 'will take more care of the houſe to-morrow; for 'your lady and I ſhall leave you alone to the care of 'it. Here, madam,' ſaid ſhe; 'here is a preſent 'from my lord to us; here are two tickets for the 'maſquerade at Ranelagh. You will be ſo charmed 'with it. It is the ſweeteſt of all diverſions.'

'May I be damned, madam,' cries Booth, 'if my 'wife ſhall go thither.'

Mrs. Elliſon ſtared at theſe words, and, indeed, ſo did Amelia: for they were ſpoke with great vehemence. At length, the former cried out with an air of aſtoniſhment, 'Not let your lady go to Ranelagh, Sir?'

'No, madam,' cries Booth, 'I will not let my wife 'go to Ranelagh.'

'You ſurpriſe me,' cries Mrs. Elliſon. 'Sure you 'are not in earneſt.'

'Indeed, madam,' returned he, 'I am ſeriouſly 'in earneſt. And what is more, I am convinced ſhe 'would of her own accord refuſe to go.'

'Now, madam,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'you are to 'anſwer for yourſelf; and I will for your huſband, 'that, if you have a deſire to go, he will not refuſe 'you.'

'I hope, madam,' anſwered Amelia with great gravity, 'I ſhall never deſire to go to any place 'contrary to Mr. Booth's inclinations.'

'Did ever mortal hear the like?' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon; 'you are enough to ſpoil the beſt huſband in the 'univerſe. Inclinations! what, is a woman to be go'verned then by her huſband's inclinations, though 'they are never ſo unreaſonable?'

'Pardon me, madam,' ſaid Amelia, 'I will not 'ſuppoſe Mr. Booth's inclinations ever can be unrea'ſonable. I am very much obliged to you for the of'fer you have made me; but I beg you will not men'tion it more: for, after what Mr. Booth hath de'clared, if Ranelagh was a heaven upon earth, I 'would refuſe to go to it.'

'I thank you, my dear,' cries Booth, 'I do aſſure

'you

'you, you oblige me beyond my power of expreſſion 'by what you ſay; but I will endeavour to ſhow you 'both my ſenſibility of ſuch goodneſs, and my laſting 'gratitude to it.'

'And pray, Sir,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'what can be 'your objection to your lady's going to a place which 'I will venture to ſay is as reputable as any about 'town, and which is frequented by the beſt company?'

'Pardon me, good Mrs. Elliſon,' ſaid Booth. 'As my wife is ſo good to acquieſce without knowing 'my reaſons, I am not, I think, obliged to aſſign 'them to any other perſon.'

'Well,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'if I had been told 'this, I would not have believed it. What! refuſe 'your lady an innocent diverſion, and that too when 'you have not the pretence to ſay it would coſt you 'a farthing!'

'Why will you ſay any more on this ſubject, dear 'madam?' cries Amelia. 'All diverſions are to me 'matters of ſuch indifference, that the bare inclina-'tions of any one for whom I have the leaſt value, 'would at all times turn the balance of mine. I am 'ſure, then, after what Mr. Booth hath ſaid,'——

'My dear,' cries he, taking her up haſtily, 'I ſin-'cerely aſk your pardon, I ſpoke inadvertently, and 'in a paſſion—I never once thought of controuling 'you—nor ever would.—Nay, I ſaid in the ſame 'breath you would not go; and upon my honour 'I meant nothing more.'

'My dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'you have no need of mak-'ing any apology. I am not in the leaſt offended, 'and am convinced you will never deny me what I 'ſhall deſire.'

'Try him, try him, madam,' cries Mrs. Elliſon. 'I will be judged by all the women in town, if it is 'poſſible for a wife to aſk her huſband any thing more 'reaſonable. You cannot conceive what a ſweet, 'charming, elegant, delicious place it is.—Paradiſe 'itſelf can hardly be equal to it.'

'I beg you will excuſe me, madam,' ſaid Amelia: 'nay, I intreat you will aſk me no more: for be aſ-'ſured I muſt and will refuſe—Do let me deſire you

'to give the ticket to poor Mrs. Bennet. I believe it 'would greatly oblige her.'——

'Pardon me, madam,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon. 'If you 'will not accept of it, I am not ſo diſtreſſed for want 'of company as to go to ſuch a public place with 'all ſort of people neither. I am always very glad 'to ſee Mrs. Bennet at my own houſe; becauſe I 'look upon her as a very good ſort of woman; 'but I don't chooſe to be ſeen with ſuch people in 'public places.'

Amelia expreſſed ſome little indignation at this laſt ſpeech, which ſhe declared to be entirely beyond her comprehenſion: and ſoon after Mrs. Elliſon, finding all her efforts to prevail on Amelia were ineffectual, took her leave, giving Mr. Booth two or three ſarcaſtical words, and a much more ſarcaſtical look, at her departure.

CHAP. VI.

A ſcene, in which ſome ladies will poſſibly think Amelia's *conduct exceptionable.*

BOOTH and his wife being left alone, a ſolemn ſilence prevailed during a few minutes. At laſt Amelia, who, though a good, was yet a human creature, ſaid to her huſband—'Pray, my dear, do in-'form me, what could put you into ſo great a paſſion 'when Mrs. Elliſon firſt offered me the tickets for this 'maſquerade?'

'I had rather you would not aſk me,' ſaid Booth. 'You have obliged me greatly in your ready ac-'quieſcence with my deſire, and you will add great-'ly to the obligation by not enquiring the reaſon 'of it. This you may depend upon, Amelia, that 'your good and happineſs are the great objects of all 'my wiſhes, and the end I propoſe in all my actions. 'This view alone could tempt me to refuſe you any 'thing, or to conceal any thing from you.'

'I will appeal to yourſelf,' anſwered ſhe, 'whether 'this be not uſing me too much like a child, and 'whether I can poſſibly help being a little offended 'at it.'

'Not

'Not in the leaſt,' replied he. 'I uſe you only 'with the tenderneſs of a friend. I would only en-'deavour to conceal that from you, which I think 'would give you uneaſineſs if you knew. Theſe are 'called the pious frauds of friendſhip.'

'I deteſt all fraud,' ſays ſhe; 'and pious is too 'good an epithet to be joined to ſo odious a word. 'You have often, you know, tried theſe frauds with 'no better effect than to teaze and torment me. You 'cannot imagine, my dear, but that I muſt have a 'violent deſire to know the reaſon of words, which, 'I own, I never expected to have heard. And the 'more you have ſhown a reluctance to tell me, the 'more eagerly I have longed to know. Nor can this 'be called a vain curioſity; ſince I ſeem ſo much in-'tereſted in this affair. If, after all this, you ſtill in-'ſiſt on keeping the ſecret, I will convince you, I am 'not ignorant of the duty of a wife, by my obedi-'ence; but I cannot help telling you at the ſame 'time, you will make me one of the moſt miſerable 'of women.'

'That is,' cries he, 'in other words, my dear 'Emily, to ſay, I will be contented without the ſe-'cret; but I am reſolved to know it nevertheleſs.'

'Nay, if you ſay ſo,' cries ſhe, 'I am convinced 'you will tell me—Poſitively, dear Billy, I muſt and 'will know.'

'Why then poſitively,' ſays Booth, 'I will tell 'you. And I think I ſhall then ſhow you, that how-'ever well you may know the duty of a wife, I am 'not always able to behave like a huſband. In a 'word then, my dear, the ſecret is no more than 'this—I am unwilling you ſhould receive any more 'preſents from my lord.'

'Mercy upon me!' cries ſhe, with all the marks of aſtoniſhment—'what a maſquerade ticket.'——

'Yes, my dear,' cries he, 'that is perhaps the 'very worſt and moſt dangerous of all. Few men 'make preſents of thoſe tickets to ladies, without 'intending to meet them at the place. And what do 'we know of your companion? To be ſincere with 'you, I have not liked her behaviour for ſome time.

'What might be the conſequence of going with ſuch 'a woman to ſuch a place, to meet ſuch a perſon, I 'tremble to think—And now, my dear, I have told 'you my reaſon of refuſing her offer with ſome little 'vehemence, and I think, I need explain myſelf no 'farther.'

'You need not, indeed, ſir,' anſwered ſhe. 'Good 'Heavens! did I ever expect to hear this! I can ap-'peal to Heaven; nay, I will appeal to yourſelf, Mr. 'Booth, if I have ever done any thing to deſerve ſuch 'a ſuſpicion. If ever any action of mine, nay, if 'ever any thought had ſtained the innocence of my 'ſoul, I could be contented.'

'How cruelly do you miſtake me,' ſaid Booth—'What ſuſpicion have I ever ſhown?'

'Can you aſk it,' anſwered ſhe, 'after what you 'have juſt now declared?'

'If I have declared any ſuſpicion of you,' replied he; 'or if I ever entertained a thought leading that 'way, may the worſt of evils that ever afflicted human 'nature attend me. I know the pure innocence of 'that tender boſom, I do know it, my lovely angel, 'and adore it. The ſnares which might be laid for 'that innocence were alone the cauſe of my appre-'henſion. I feared what a wicked and voluptuous 'man, reſolved to ſacrifice every thing to the gratifi-'cation of a ſenſual appetite with the moſt delicious 'repaſt, might attempt. If ever I injured the un-'ſpotted whiteneſs of thy virtue in my imagination, 'may hell——

'Do not terrify me,' cries ſhe, interrupting him, 'with ſuch imprecations. O, Mr. Booth, Mr. Booth, 'you muſt well know that a woman's virtue is always 'her ſufficient guard. No huſband without ſuſpecting 'that, can ſuſpect any danger from thoſe ſnares you 'mention—And why, if you are liable to take ſuch 'things into your head, may not your ſuſpicions fall 'on me, as well as on any other? For ſure nothing 'was ever more unjuſt, I will not ſay ungrateful, 'than the ſuſpicions which you have beſtowed on his 'lordſhip. I do ſolemnly declare, in all the times I 'have ſeen the poor man, he hath never once offered

'the

'the leaſt forwardneſs. His behaviour hath been po-
'lite indeed, but rather remarkably diſtant than
'otherwiſe. Particularly when we played at cards
'together. I don't remember he ſpoke ten words to
'me all the evening; and when I was at his houſe,
'though he ſhowed the greateſt fondneſs imaginable
'to the children, he took ſo little notice of me, that
'a vain woman would have been very little pleaſed
'with him. And, if he gave them many preſents, he
'never offered me one. The firſt, indeed, which he
'ever offered me was that, which you in that kind
'manner forced me to refuſe.'

'All this may be only the effect of art,' ſaid Booth.
'I am convinced he doth, nay, I am convinced he
'muſt like you; and my good friend James, who
'perfectly well knows the world, told me, that his
'lordſhip's character was that of the moſt profuſe in
'his pleaſures with women; nay, what ſaid Mrs.
'James this very evening,—"his lordſhip is ex-
"tremely generous—where he likes."

'I ſhall never forget the ſneer with which ſhe
'ſpoke thoſe laſt words.'

'I am convinced they injure him,' cries Amelia.
'As for Mrs. James, ſhe was always given to be cen-
'ſorious: I remarked it in her long ago, as her great-
'eſt fault. And as for the colonel, I believe, he may
'find faults enow of this kind in his own boſom,
'without ſearching after them among his neighbours.
'I am ſure he hath the moſt impudent look of all the
'men I know; and I ſolemnly declare, the very laſt
'time he was here, he put me out of countenance
'more than once.'

'Colonel James,' anſwered Booth, 'may have his
'faults very probably. I do not look upon him as
'a ſaint, nor do I believe he deſires I ſhould: but
'what intereſt could he have in abuſing this lord's
'character to me? or why ſhould I queſtion his truth,
'when he aſſured me that my lord had never done an
'act of beneficence in his life, but for the ſake of
'ſome woman whom he luſted after?'

'Then I myſelf can confute him,' replied Amelia;
'for, beſides his ſervices to you, which, for the future,

'I ſhall wiſh to forget, and his kindneſs to my little 'babes, how inconſiſtent is the character which James 'gives of him with his lordſhip's behaviour to his 'own nephew and niece, whoſe extreme fondneſs of 'their uncle ſufficiently proclaims his goodneſs to 'them?—I need not mention all that I have heard 'from Mrs. Elliſon, every word of which I believe: 'for I have great reaſon to think, notwithſtanding 'ſome little levity, which, to give her her due, ſhe 'ſees and condemns in herſelf, ſhe is a very good ſort 'of woman.'

'Well, my dear,' cries Booth, 'I may have been 'deceived, and I heartily hope I am ſo; but in caſes 'of this nature it is always good to be on the ſureſt 'ſide: for, as Congreve ſays,

'The wife too jealous are: Fools too ſecure.'

Here Amelia burſt into tears, upon which, Booth immediately caught her in his arms, and endeavoured to comfort her.—Paſſion however for a while obſtructed her ſpeech, and at laſt ſhe cried,—'O Mr. Booth, can 'I bear to hear the word jealouſy from your mouth?'

'Why, my love,' ſaid Booth, 'will you ſo fatally 'miſunderſtand my meaning? How often ſhall I pro- 'teſt that it is not of you, but of him that I was 'jealous. If you could look into my breaſt, and 'there read all the moſt ſecret thoughts of my heart, 'you would not ſee one faint idea to your diſho- 'nour.'

'I don't miſunderſtand you, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'ſo much as I am afraid you miſunderſtand your- 'ſelf. What is it you fear?—you mention not force, 'but ſnares. Is not this to confeſs at leaſt, that you 'have ſome doubt of my underſtanding? do you then 'really imagine me ſo weak as to be cheated of my 'virtue? am I to be deceived into an affection for a 'man, before I perceive the leaſt inward hint of my 'danger? No, Mr. Booth, believe me a woman muſt 'be a fool indeed, who can have in earneſt ſuch an 'excuſe for her actions. I have not, I think, any 'very high opinion of my judgement: but ſo far I 'ſhall rely upon it, that no man breathing could

'have

'have any ſuch deſigns as you have apprehended, 'without my immediately ſeeing them; and how I 'ſhould then act I hope my whole conduct to you 'hath ſufficiently declared.'

'Well, my dear,' cries Booth, 'I beg you will 'mention it no more, if poſſible forget it. I hope, 'nay, I believe, I have been in the wrong, pray for-'give me.

'I will, I do forgive you, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'if 'forgiveneſs be a proper word for one whom you 'have rather made miſerable than angry; but let me 'entreat you to baniſh for ever all ſuch ſuſpicions from 'your mind. I hope Mrs. Elliſon hath not diſcovered 'the real cauſe of your paſſion; but, poor woman, if 'ſhe had, I am convinced it would go no farther. 'O Heavens! I would not for the world it ſhould 'reach his lordſhip's ears. You would loſe the beſt 'friend that ever man had. Nay, I would not for 'his own ſake, poor man! for I really believe it 'would affect him greatly, and I muſt, I cannot help 'having an eſteem for ſo much goodneſs. An eſteem 'which, by this dear hand,' ſaid ſhe, taking Booth's hand and kiſſing it, 'no man alive ſhall ever obtain 'by making love to me.'

Booth caught her in his arms and tenderly embraced her. After which the reconciliation ſoon became complete; and Booth in the contemplation of his happineſs entirely buried all his jealous thoughts.

CHAP. VII.

A Chapter in which there is much Learning.

THE next morning, whilſt Booth was gone to take his morning-walk, Amelia went down into Mrs. Elliſon's apartment, where, though ſhe was received with great civility, yet ſhe found that lady was not at all pleaſed with Mr. Booth; and, by ſome hints which dropped from her in converſation, Amelia very greatly apprehended that Mrs. Elliſon had too much ſuſpicion of her huſband's real uneaſineſs. For that lady declared very openly, ſhe could not help perceiving what ſort of man Mr. Booth was; 'And 'though I have the greateſt regard for you, madam,

'in the world,' ſaid ſhe, 'yet I think myſelf in honour obliged not to impoſe on his lordſhip, who, I 'know very well, hath conceived his greateſt liking 'to the captain on my telling him that he was the beſt 'huſband in the world.'

Amelia's fears gave her much diſturbance, and, when her huſband returned, ſhe acquainted him with them; upon which occaſion, as it was natural, ſhe reſumed a little the topic of their former diſcourſe, nor could ſhe help caſting, though in very gentle term, ſome ſlight blame on Booth, for having entertained a ſuſpicion, which, ſhe ſaid, might in its conſequence very poſſibly prove their ruin, and occaſion the loſs of his lordſhip's friendſhip.

Booth became highly affected with what his wife ſaid, and the more as he had juſt received a note from Colonel James, informing him that the colonel had heard of a vacant company in the regiment which Booth had mentioned to him, and that he had been with his lordſhip about it, who had promiſed to uſe his utmoſt intereſt to obtain him the command.

The poor man now expreſſed the utmoſt concern for his yeſterday's behaviour, ſaid 'He believed the 'devil had taken poſſeſſion of him,' and concluded with crying out—'Sure I was born, my deareſt crea-'ture, to be your torment.'

Amelia no ſooner ſaw her huſband's diſtreſs than ſhe inſtantly forebore whatever might ſeem likely to aggravate it, and applied herſelf with all her power to comfort him. 'If you will give me leave to offer 'my advice, my deareſt ſoul,' ſaid ſhe, 'I think all 'might yet be remedied. I think you know me too 'well, to ſuſpect that the deſire of diverſion ſhould 'induce me to mention what I am now going to 'propoſe. And in that confidence I will aſk you to 'let me accept my lord's and Mrs. Elliſon's offer, 'and go to the maſquerade. No matter how little 'while I ſtay there: if you deſire it, I will not be an 'hour from you. I can make an hundred excuſes 'to come home, or tell a real truth, and ſay I am 'tired with the place. The bare going will cure 'every thing.'

Amelia

Amelia had no ſooner done ſpeaking, than Booth immediately approved her advice, and readily gave his conſent. He could not however help ſaying, 'that the 'ſhorter her ſtay was there, the more agreeable it would 'be to him: for you know, my dear,' ſaid he, 'I would 'never willingly be a moment out of your ſight.'

In the afternoon Amelia ſent to invite Mrs. Elliſon to a diſh of tea; and Booth undertook to laugh off all that had paſſed yeſterday, in which attempt, the abundant good humour of that lady gave him great hopes of ſucceſs.

Mrs. Bennet came that afternoon to make a viſit, and was almoſt an hour with Booth and Amelia before the entry of Mrs. Elliſon.

Mr. Booth had hitherto rather diſliked this young lady, and had wondered at the pleaſure which Amelia declared ſhe took in her company. This afternoon, however, he changed his opinion, and liked her almoſt as much as his wife had done. She did, indeed, behave at this time with more than ordinary gaiety; and good humour gave a glow to her countenance that ſet off her features, which were very pretty, to the beſt advantage, and leſſened the deadneſs that had uſually appeared in her complexion.

But if Booth was now pleaſed with Mrs. Bennet, Amelia was ſtill more pleaſed with her than ever. For, when their diſcourſe turned on love, Amelia diſcovered that her new friend had all the ſame ſentiments on that ſubject with herſelf. In the courſe of their converſation, Booth gave Mrs. Bennet a hint of wiſhing her a good huſband, upon which, both the ladies declaimed againſt ſecond marriages with equal vehemence.

Upon this occaſion, Booth and his wife diſcovered a talent in their viſitant, to which they had been before entirely ſtrangers, and for which they both greatly admired her; and this was, that the lady was a good ſcholar, in which indeed ſhe had the advantage of poor Amelia, whoſe reading was confined to Engliſh plays, and poetry; beſides which, I think, ſhe had converſed only with the divinity of the great and

and learned Dr. Barrow, and with the hiſtories of the excellent Biſhop Burnet.

Amelia delivered herſelf on the ſubject of ſecond marriages with much eloquence and great good ſenſe; but when Mrs. Bennet came to give her opinion, ſhe ſpoke in the following manner—'I ſhall not enter in-'to the queſtion concerning the legality of bigamy. 'Our laws certainly allow it, and ſo, I think, doth 'our religion. We are now debating only on the 'decency of it, and in this light, I own myſelf as 'ſtrenuous an advocate againſt it as any Roman ma-'tron would have been in thoſe ages of the common-'wealth when it was held to be infamous. For my 'own part, how great a paradox ſoever my opinion 'may ſeem, I ſolemnly declare, I ſee but little dif-'ference between having two huſbands at one time, 'and at ſeveral times; and of this I am very confi-'dent, that the ſame degree of love for a firſt huſ-'band, which preſerves a woman in the one caſe, will 'preſerve her in the other. There is one argument, 'which I ſcarce know how to deliver before you, Sir; 'but, if a woman hath lived with her firſt huſband 'without having children, I think it unpardonable 'in her to carry barrenneſs into a ſecond family. On 'the contrary, if ſhe hath children by her firſt huſ-'band, to give them a ſecond father is ſtill more 'unpardonable.'

'But ſuppoſe, madam,' cries Booth, interrupting her, with a ſmile, 'ſhe ſhould have had children by 'her firſt huſband and have loſt them.'

'That is a caſe,' anſwered ſhe, with a ſigh, 'which I did not deſire to think of, and I muſt own 'it the moſt favourable light in which a ſecond 'marriage can be ſeen. But the ſcriptures, as Pe-'trarch obſerves, rather ſuffer them than commend 'them; and St. Jerome ſpeaks againſt them with the 'utmoſt bitterneſs.'—'I remember,' cries Booth, '(who was willing either to ſhow his learning, or to 'draw out the lady's) a very wiſe law of Charondas 'the famous lawgiver of Thurium, by which men 'who married a ſecond time were removed from all 'public councils: for it was ſcarce reaſonable to ſup-

'poſe,

'poſe, that he who was ſo great a fool in his own 'family ſhould be wiſe in public affairs. And 'though ſecond marriages were permitted among the 'Romans, yet they were at the ſame time diſcou-'raged; and thoſe Roman widows who refuſed them 'were held in high eſteem, and honoured with what 'Valerius Maximus calls the *Corona Pudicitiæ*. In 'the noble family of Camilli, there was not, in 'many ages, a ſingle inſtance of this, which Martial 'calls adultery:

Quæ toties nubit, non nubit; adultera lege eſt.

'True, Sir, ſays Mrs. Bennet, and Virgil calls 'this a violation of chaſtity, and makes Dido ſpeak 'of it with the utmoſt deteſtation:

Sed mihi vel tellus optem prius imæ debiſcat,
Vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam,
Ante, pudor, quam te violo, aut tua jura reſolvo.
Ille meos, primum qui me ſibi junxit, amores,
Ille habeat ſemper ſecum, ſervetque ſepulchro.

She repeated theſe lines with ſo ſtrong an empha-ſis, that ſhe almoſt frightened Amelia out of her wits, and not a little ſtaggered Booth, who was himſelf no contemptible ſcholar—He expreſſed great admiration of the lady's learning; upon which ſhe ſaid it was all the fortune given her by her father, and all the dower left her by her huſband; 'and ſometimes,' ſaid ſhe, 'I am inclined to think I enjoy more pleaſure from it 'than if they had beſtowed on me what the world 'would in general call more valuable.' She then took occaſion, from the ſurpriſe which Booth had af-fected to conceive at her repeating Latin with ſo good a grace, to comment on that great abſurdity (for ſo ſhe termed it) of excluding women from learning; for which they were equally qualified with the men, and in which ſo many had made ſo notable a pro-ficiency; for a proof of which ſhe mentioned Madam Dacier, and many others.

Though both Booth and Amelia outwardly con-curred with her ſentiments, it may be a queſtion whe-ther

ther they did not aſſent rather out of complaiſance, than from their real judgement.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing ſome unaccountable behaviour in Mrs. Elliſon.

MRS. Elliſon made her entrance at the end of the preceding diſcourſe. At her firſt appearance ſhe put on an unuſual degree of formality and reſerve; but when Amelia had acquainted her that ſhe deſigned to accept the favour intended her, ſhe ſoon began to alter the gravity of her muſcles, and preſently fell in with that ridicule which Booth thought proper to throw on his yeſterday's behaviour.

The converſation now became very lively and pleaſant, in which Booth having mentioned the diſcourſe that paſſed in the laſt chapter, and having greatly complimented Mrs. Bennet's ſpeech on that occaſion, Mrs. Elliſon, who was as ſtrenuous an advocate on the other ſide, began to rally that lady extremely, declaring it was a certain ſign ſhe intended to marry again ſoon. 'Married ladies,' cries ſhe, 'I believe, 'ſometimes think themſelves in earneſt in ſuch de-'clarations, though they are oftener perhaps meant as 'compliments to their huſbands; but when widows 'exclaim loudly againſt ſecond marriages, I would 'always lay a wager, that the man, if not the wed-'ding-day, is abſolutely fixed on.'

Mrs. Bennet made very little anſwer to this ſarcaſm. Indeed, ſhe had ſcarce opened her lips from the time of Mrs. Elliſon's coming into the room, and had grown particularly grave at the mention of the maſquerade. Amelia imputed this to her being left out of the party, a matter which is often no ſmall mortification to human pride, and in a whiſper aſked Mrs. Elliſon if ſhe could not procure a third ticket; to which ſhe received an abſolute negative.

During the whole time of Mrs. Bennet's ſtay, which was above an hour afterwards, ſhe remained perfectly ſilent, and looked extremely melancholy. This made Amelia very uneaſy, as ſhe concluded ſhe had gueſſed the cauſe of her vexation. In which opinion ſhe was

the more confirmed from certain looks of no very pleaſant kind which Mrs. Bennet now and then caſt on Mrs. Elliſon, and the more than ordinary concern that appeared in the former lady's countenance whenever the maſquerade was mentioned, and which unfortunately was the principal topic of their diſcourſe; for Mrs. Elliſon gave a very elaborate deſcription of the extreme beauty of the place, and elegance of the diverſion.

When Mrs. Bennet was departed, Amelia could not help again ſolliciting Mrs. Elliſon for another ticket, declaring ſhe was certain Mrs. Bennet had a great inclination to go with them; but Mrs. Elliſon again excuſed herſelf from aſking it of his lordſhip. 'Beſides, 'madam,' ſays ſhe, 'if I would go thither with Mrs. 'Bennet, which, I own to you, I don't chooſe, as ſhe 'is a perſon whom *nobody knows*, I very much doubt 'whether ſhe herſelf would like it: for ſhe is a wo'man of a very unaccountable turn. All her delight 'lies in books; and, as for public diverſions, I have 'heard her often declare her abhorrence of them.'

'What then, ſaid Amelia, 'could occaſion all that 'gravity from the moment the maſquerade was men'tioned?'

'As to that,' anſwered the other, 'there is no 'gueſſing. You have ſeen her altogether as grave 'before now. She hath had theſe fits of gravity at 'times ever ſince the death of her huſband.'

'Poor creature,!' cries Amelia. 'I heartily pity her. 'For ſhe muſt certainly ſuffer a great deal on theſe 'occaſions. I declare I have taken a ſtrange fancy 'to her.'

'Perhaps you would not like her ſo well, if you 'knew her thoroughly,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon. 'She 'is upon the whole but of a whimſical temper; and, 'if you will take my opinion, you ſhould not culti'vate too much intimacy with her. I know you will 'never mention what I ſay; but ſhe is like ſome pic'tures, which pleaſe beſt at a diſtance.'

Amelia did not ſeem to agree with theſe ſentiments, and ſhe greatly importuned Mrs. Elliſon to be more explicit;

explicit; but to no purpoſe; ſhe continued to give only dark hints to Mrs. Bennet's diſadvantage; and, if ever ſhe let drop ſomething a little too harſh, ſhe failed not immediately to contradict herſelf, by throwing ſome gentle commendations into the other ſcale: ſo that her conduct appeared utterly unaccountable to Amelia, and upon the whole ſhe knew not whether to conclude Mrs. Elliſon to be a friend or enemy to Mrs. Bennet.

During the latter converſation, Booth was not in the room: for he had been ſummoned down ſtairs by the ſerjeant, who came to him with news from Murphy, whom he had met that evening, and who aſſured the ſerjeant, that if he was deſirous of recovering the debt, which he had before pretended to have on Booth, he might ſhortly have an opportunity; for that there was to be a very ſtrong petition to the board the next time they ſat. Murphy ſaid further, that he need not fear having his money: for that to his certain knowledge the captain had ſeveral things of great value, and even his children had gold watches.

This greatly alarmed Booth, and ſtill more, when the ſerjeant reported to him from Murphy, that all theſe things had been ſeen in his poſſeſſion within a day laſt paſt. He now plainly perceived, as he thought, that Murphy himſelf, or one of his emiſſaries, had been the ſuppoſed madman; and he now very well accounted to himſelf in his own mind for all that had happened, conceiving that the deſign was to examine into the ſtate of his effects, and to try whether it was worth his creditors while to plunder him by law.

At his return to his apartment, he communicated what he had heard to Amelia and Mrs. Elliſon, not diſguiſing his apprehenſions of the enemy's intentions; but Mrs. Elliſon endeavoured to laugh him out of his fears, calling him faint-hearted, and aſſuring him he might depend on her lawyer.—'Till 'you hear from him,' ſaid ſhe, 'you may reſt entire-'ly contented: for, take my word for it, no danger 'can happen to you of which you will not be timely 'appriſed by him. And as for the fellow that had 'the impudence to come into your room, if he was

'ſent

'ſent on ſuch an errand as you mention, I heartily wiſh 'I had been at home; I would have ſecured him ſafe 'with a conſtable, and have carried him directly be- 'fore Juſtice Treſher. I know the juſtice is an ene- 'my to the bailiffs on his own account.'

This heartening ſpeech a little rouſed the courage of Booth, and ſomewhat comforted Amelia, though the ſpirits of both had been too much hurried, to ſuffer them either to give or receive much entertainment that evening; which Mrs. Elliſon perceiving, ſoon took her leave, and left this unhappy couple to ſeek relief from ſleep, that powerful friend to the diſtreſſed, though, like other powerful friends he is not always ready to give his aſſiſtance to thoſe who want it moſt.

CHAP. IX.

Containing a very ſtrange incident.

WHEN the huſband and wife were alone, they again talked over the news which the ſerjeant had brought; on which occaſion, Amelia did all ſhe could to conceal her own fears, and to quiet thoſe of her huſband. At laſt ſhe turned the converſation to another ſubject, and poor Mrs. Bennet was brought on the carpet. 'I ſhould be ſorry,' cries Amelia, 'to 'find I had conceived an affection for a bad woman; 'and yet I begin to fear Mrs. Elliſon knows ſome- 'thing of her more than ſhe cares to diſcover; why 'elſe ſhould ſhe be unwilling to be ſeen with her in 'public? Beſides, I have obſerved that Mrs. Elliſon 'hath been always backward to introduce her to me, 'nor would ever bring her to my apartment, though 'I have often deſired her. Nay, ſhe hath given me 'frequent hints not to cultivate the acquaintance. 'What do you think, my dear?—I ſhould be very 'ſorry to contract an intimacy with a wicked per- 'ſon.'

'Nay, my dear,' cries Booth, 'I know no more 'of her, nor indeed hardly ſo much, as yourſelf. But 'this I think, that if Mrs. Elliſon knows any reaſon 'why ſhe ſhould not have introduced Mrs. Bennet in-

to

'to your company, ſhe was very much in the wrong 'in introducing her into it.'

In diſcourſes of this kind they paſſed the remainder of the evening. In the morning Booth roſe early, and going down ſtairs received from little Betty a ſealed note, which contained the following words:

Beware, beware, beware,
For I apprehend a dreadful ſnare
Is laid for virtuous innocence,
Under a friend's falſe pretence.

Booth immediately enquired of the girl, who brought this note, and was told it came by a chairman, who, having delivered it, departed without ſaying a word.

He was extremely ſtaggered at what he read, and preſently referred the advice to the ſame affair on which he had received thoſe hints from Atkinſon the preceding evening; but when he came to conſider the words more maturely, he could not ſo well reconcile the two laſt lines of this poetical epiſtle, if it may be ſo called, with any danger which the law gave him reaſon to apprehend. Mr. Murphy and his gang could not well be ſaid to attack his innocence or virtue; nor did they attack him under any colour or pretence of friendſhip.

After much deliberation on this matter, a very ſtrange ſuſpicion came into his head; and this was, that he was betrayed by Mrs. Elliſon. He had for ſome time conceived no very high opinion of that good gentlewoman, and he now began to ſuſpect that ſhe was bribed to betray him. By this means he thought he could beſt account for the ſtrange appearance of the ſuppoſed madman. And when this conceit once had birth in his mind, ſeveral circumſtances nouriſhed and improved it. Among theſe were her jocoſe behaviour and raillery on that occaſion, and her attempt to ridicule his fears from the meſſage which the ſerjeant had brought him.

This ſuſpicion was indeed prepoſterous, and not at all warranted by, or even conſiſtent with the character and whole behaviour of Mrs. Elliſon; but it was the *only* one which at that time ſuggeſted itſelf to his mind;

mind; and, however blameable it might be, it was certainly not unnatural in him to entertain it: for ſo great a torment is anxiety to the human mind, that we always endeavour to relieve ourſelves from it, by gueſſes however doubtful or uncertain; on all which occaſions, diſlike and hatred are the ſureſt guides to lead our ſuſpicion to its object.

When Amelia roſe to breakfaſt, Booth produced the note which he had received, ſaying,—'My dear, you 'have ſo often blamed me for keeping ſecrets from 'you, and I have ſo often indeed endeavoured to con-'ceal ſecrets of this kind from you with ſuch ill ſucceſs, 'that I think I ſhall never more attempt it.' Amelia read the letter haſtily, and ſeemed not a little diſcompoſed: then turning to Booth with a very diſconſolate countenance, ſhe ſaid—'Sure fortune takes a 'delight in terrifying us! What can be the meaning 'of this?'—Then fixing her eyes attentively on the paper, ſhe peruſed it for ſome time, till Booth cried ——'How is it poſſible, my Emily, you can read 'ſuch ſtuff patiently! the verſes are certainly as bad 'as ever were written.'—'I was trying, my dear,' anſwered ſhe, 'to recollect the hand; for I will take 'my oath, I have ſeen it before, and that very lately;' and ſuddenly ſhe cried out, with great emotion, I remember it perfectly now—'It is Mrs. Bennet's hand. 'Mrs. Elliſon ſhowed me a letter from her but a day 'or two ago. It is a very remarkable hand, and I am 'poſitive it is her's.'

'If it be her's,' cries Booth, 'what can ſhe poſſibly 'mean by the latter part of her caution? Sure, Mrs. 'Elliſon hath no intention to betray us.'

'I know not what ſhe means,' anſwered Amelia, 'but I am reſolved to know immediately; for I am 'certain of the hand. By the greateſt luck in the 'world, ſhe told me yeſterday where her lodgings 'were, when ſhe preſſed me exceedingly to come and 'ſee her. She lives but a very few doors from us, 'and I will go to her this moment.'

Booth made not the leaſt objection to his wife's deſign. His curioſity was indeed as great as her's, and ſo was his impatience to ſatisfy it, though he mention-

ed not this his impatience to Amelia; and perhaps it had been well for him if he had.

Amelia therefore preſently equipped herſelf in her walking dreſs, and leaving her children to the care of her huſband, made all poſſible haſte to Mrs. Bennet's lodgings.

Amelia waited near five minutes at Mrs. Bennet's door, before any one came to open it; at length a maid-ſervant appeared, who being aſked if Mrs. Bennet was at home, anſwered with ſome confuſion in her countenance, that ſhe did not know, 'But, ma-'dam,' ſaid ſhe, 'if you will ſend up your name, I 'will go and ſee.' Amelia then told her name, and the wench, after ſtaying a conſiderable time, returned and acquainted her that Mrs. Bennet was at home. She was then uſhered into a parlour, and told that the lady would wait on her preſently.

In this parlour, Amelia cooled her heels, as the phraſe is, near a quarter of an hour. She ſeemed indeed at this time in the miſerable ſituation of one of thoſe poor wretches, who make their morning viſits to the great, to ſolicit favours, or perhaps to ſolicit the payment of a debt: for both are alike treated as beggars, and the latter ſometimes conſidered as the more troubleſome beggars of the two.

During her ſtay her, Amelia obſerved the houſe to be in great confuſion: a great buſtle was heard above ſtairs, and the maid ran up and down ſeveral times in a great hurry.

At length Mrs. Bennet herſelf came in. She was greatly diſordered in her looks, and had, as the women call it, huddled on her clothes in much haſte; for in truth, ſhe was in bed when Amelia firſt came. Of this fact ſhe informed her, as the only apology ſhe could make for having cauſed her to wait ſo long for her company.

Amelia very readily accepted her apology, but aſked her with a ſmile, if theſe early hours were uſual with her. Mrs. Bennet turned as red as ſcarlet at the queſtion, and anſwered, 'No, indeed, dear madam. I 'am, for the moſt part, a very early riſer; but I 'happened accidentally to ſit up very late laſt night.

'I am

'I am ſure I had little expectation of your intending 'me ſuch a favour this morning.'

Amelia looking very ſtedfaſtly at her, ſaid—'Is it 'poſſible, madam, you ſhould think ſuch a note as 'this, would raiſe no curioſity in me?' She then gave her the note, aſking her if ſhe did not know the hand.

Mrs. Bennet appeared in the utmoſt ſurpriſe and confuſion at this inſtant. Indeed, if Amelia had conceived but the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion before, the behaviour of the lady would have been a ſufficient confirmation to her of the truth. She waited not, therefore, for an anſwer; which, indeed, the other ſeemed in no haſte to give; but conjured her in the moſt earneſt manner, to explain to her the meaning of ſo extraordinary an act of friendſhip—'For ſo,' ſaid ſhe, 'I eſteem it; 'being convinced you muſt have ſufficient reaſon for 'the warning you have given me.'

Mrs. Bennet, after ſome heſitation, anſwered—'I 'need not, I believe, tell you how much I am ſur-'priſed at what you have ſhown me, and the chief 'reaſon of my ſurpriſe is, how you came to diſcover 'my hand. Sure, madam, you have not ſhown it to 'Mrs. Elliſon.'

Amelia declared ſhe had not; but deſired ſhe would queſtion her no further. 'What ſignifies how I diſ-'covered it, ſince your hand it certainly is?'

'I own it is,' cries Mrs. Bennet, recovering her ſpirits, 'and ſince you have not ſhown it to that wo-'man, I am ſatisfied. I begin to gueſs now whence 'you might have your information; but no matter 'I wiſh I had never done any thing of which I ought 'to be more aſhamed.—No one can, I think, juſtly 'accuſe me of a crime on that account; and I thank 'Heaven, my ſhame will never be directed by the 'falſe opinion of the world.—Perhaps it was wrong 'to ſhow my letter; but, when I conſider all circum-'ſtances, I can forgive it.'

'Since you have gueſſed the truth,' ſaid Amelia, 'I am not obliged to deny it. She indeed ſhowed 'me your letter; but I am ſure you have not 'the leaſt reaſon to be aſhamed of it. On the con-'trary, your behaviour on ſo melancholy an occaſion

'was highly praiſe-worthy; and your bearing up 'under ſuch afflictions, as the loſs of a huſband in 'ſo dreadful a ſituation, was truely great and he-'roical.'

'So Mrs. Elliſon then hath ſhown you my letter?' cries Mrs. Bennet eagerly,

'Why, did not you gueſs it yourſelf?' anſwered Amelia; 'otherwiſe I am ſure I have betrayed my 'honour in mentioning it. I hope you have not 'drawn me inadvertently into any breach of my pro-'miſe. Did you not aſſert, and that with an abſo-'lute certainty, that you knew ſhe had ſhown me 'your letter, and that you was not angry with her 'for ſo doing?'

'I am ſo confuſed,' replied Mrs. Bennet, 'that 'I ſcarce know what I ſay: yes, yes, I remember 'I did ſay ſo——I wiſh I had no greater reaſon to be 'angry with her than that.'

'For Heaven's ſake,' cries Amelia, 'do not delay 'my requeſt any longer? What you ſay now greatly 'increaſes my curioſity; and my mind will be on 'the rack till you diſcover your whole meaning: 'for I am more and more convinced, that ſomething 'of the utmoſt importance was the Purport of your 'meſſage.'

'Of the utmoſt importance indeed,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'at leaſt you will own my apprehenſions 'were ſufficiently well founded—O gracious Heaven, 'how happy ſhall I think myſelf, if I ſhould have 'proved you preſervation! I will indeed explain my 'meaning; but, in order to diſcloſe all my fears in 'their juſt colours, I muſt unfold my whole hiſtory 'to you. Can you have patience, madam, to liſten 'to the ſtory of the moſt unfortunate of women?'

Amelia aſſured her of the higheſt Attention; and Mrs. Bennet ſoon after began to relate what is written in the ſeventh Book of this hiſtory.

AMELIA.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

A very ſhort chapter, and conſequently requiring no preface.

MRS. Bennet having faſtened the door, and both the ladies having taken their places, ſhe once or twice offered to ſpeak, when paſſion ſtopped her utterance; and, after a minute's ſilence, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears: upon which, Amelia expreſſing the utmoſt tenderneſs for her, as well by her look as by her accent, cried—'What can be the reaſon, dear 'madam, of all this emotion?'—'O Mrs. Booth,' anſwered ſhe,—'I find I have undertaken what I am not 'able to perform—You would not wonder at my emo-'tion, if you knew you had an adultereſs and a 'murtherer now ſtanding before you.'

Amelia turned as pale as death at theſe words, which Mrs. Bennet obſerving, collected all the force ſhe was able, and, a little compoſing her countenance, cried, 'I ſee, madam, I have terrified you with ſuch dread-'ful words; but I hope you will not think me guilty 'of theſe crimes in the blackeſt degree.'—'Guilty!' cries Amelia. 'O Heavens!'—'I believe indeed your 'candour,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'will be readier 'to acquit me than I am to acquit myſelf—Indiſcre-'tion at leaſt, the higheſt, moſt unpardonable indiſ-'cretion, I ſhall always lay to my own charge; and, 'when I reflect on the fatal conſequences, I can 'never, never forgive myſelf.' Here ſhe again began to lament in ſo bitter a manner, that Amelia endeavoured, as much as ſhe could (for ſhe was herſelf

greatly ſhocked) to ſooth and comfort her; telling her, that, if indiſcretion was her higheſt crime, the unhappy conſequences made her rather an unfortunate than a guilty perſon; and concluded by ſaying—'Indeed, madam, you have raiſed my curioſity to the 'higheſt pitch, and I beg you will proceed with your 'ſtory.'

Mrs. Bennet then ſeemed a ſecond time going to begin her relation, when ſhe cried out, 'I would, if 'poſſible, tire you with no more of my unfortunate life 'than juſt with that part which leads to a cataſtrophe, 'in which I think you may yourſelf be intereſted; 'but I proteſt I am at a loſs where to begin.'

'Begin wherever you pleaſe, dear madam,' cries Amelia; 'but I beg you will conſider my impati-'ence.'—'I do conſider it,' anſwered Mrs. Bennet; 'and therefore would begin with that part of my ſtory 'which leads directly to what concerns yourſelf: for 'how, indeed, ſhould my life produce any thing 'worthy your notice?'—'Do not ſay ſo, madam,' cries Amelia. 'I aſſure you I have long ſuſpected 'there were ſome very remarkable incidents in your 'life, and have only wanted an opportunity to impart 'to you my deſire of hearing them:—I beg therefore 'you would make no more apologies.'——'I will 'not, madam,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'and yet I would 'avoid any thing trivial; though, indeed, in ſtories 'of diſtreſs, eſpecially where love is concerned, ma-'ny little incidents may appear trivial to thoſe who 'have never felt the paſſion, which to delicate minds 'are the moſt intereſting part of the whole.'—'Nay, 'but, dear madam,' cries Amelia, 'this is all pre-'face.'———

'Well, madam,' anſwered Mrs. Bennet, 'I will 'conſider your impatience.' She then rallied all her ſpirits in the beſt manner ſhe could, and began as is written in the next chapter.

And here poſſibly the reader will blame Mrs. Bennet for taking her ſtory ſo far back, and relating ſo much of her life in which Amelia had no concern; but in truth ſhe was deſirous of inculcating a good opinion of herſelf, from recounting thoſe tranſactions where her

her conduct was unexceptionable, before she came to the more dangerous and suspicious part of her character. This I really suppose to have been her intention: for to sacrifice the time and patience of Amelia at such a season to mere love of talking of herself, would have been as unpardonable in her, as the bearing it was in Amelia a proof of the most perfect good breeding.

CHAP. II.

The beginning of Mrs. Bennet's *history.*

'I Was the younger of two daughters of a clergyman in Essex; of one in whose praise, if I should indulge my fond heart in speaking, I think my invention could not outgo the reality. He was indeed well worthy of the cloth he wore; and that, I think, is the highest character a man can obtain.

'During the first part of my life, even till I reached my sixteenth year, I can recollect nothing to relate to you. All was one long serene day; in looking back upon which, as when we cast our eyes on a calm sea, no object arises to my view. All appears one scene of happiness and tranquillity.

'On the day, then, when I became sixteen years old, must I begin my history; for on that day I first tasted the bitterness of sorrow.

'My father, besides those prescribed by our religion, kept five festivals every year. These were on his wedding day, and on the birth-day of each of his little family: on these occasions he used to invite two or three neighbours to his house, and to indulge himself, as he said, in great excess: for so he called drinking a pint of very small punch; and, indeed, it might appear excess to one who on other days rarely tasted any liquor stronger than small beer.

'Upon my unfortunate birth-day, then, when we were all in a high degree of mirth, my mother having left the room after dinner, and staying away pretty long, my father sent me to see for her. I went according to his orders; but though I searched the whole house, and called after her without doors,

'I could neither ſee nor hear her. I was a little 'alarmed at this (though far from ſuſpecting any great 'miſchief had befallen her) and ran back to acquaint 'my father, who anſwered coolly (for he was a man 'of the calmeſt temper) "Very well, my dear, I "ſuppoſe ſhe is not gone far, and will be here imme-"diately." Half an hour or more paſſed after this, 'when, ſhe not returning, my father himſelf ex-'preſſed ſome ſurpriſe at her ſtay; declaring it muſt 'be ſome matter of importance which could detain her 'at that time from her company. His ſurpriſe now 'increaſed every minute; and he began to grow un-'eaſy, and to ſhow ſufficient ſymptoms in his counte-'nance of what he felt within. He then diſpatched 'the ſervant maid to enquire after her miſtreſs in the 'pariſh; but waited not her return; for ſhe was 'ſcarce gone out of doors, before he begged leave of 'his gueſts to go himſelf on the ſame errand. The 'company now all broke up, and attended my father, 'all endeavouring to give him hopes that no miſchief 'had happened. They ſearched the whole pariſh; 'but in vain: they could neither ſee my mother, nor 'hear any news of her. My father returned home in 'a ſtate little ſhort of diſtraction. His friends in 'vain attempted to adminiſter either advice or com-'fort; he threw himſelf on the floor in the moſt bitter 'agonies of deſpair.

'Whilſt he lay in this condition, my ſiſter and my-'ſelf lying by him, all equally, I believe, and com-'pletely miſerable, our old ſervant-maid came into 'the room, and cried out, her mind miſgave her that 'ſhe knew where her miſtreſs was. Upon theſe words, 'my father ſprang from the floor, and aſked her 'eagerly, where?——But, oh! Mrs. Booth, how can 'I deſcribe the particulars of a ſcene to you, the re-'membrance of which chills my blood with horror, 'and which the agonies of my mind, when it paſſed, 'made all a ſcene of confuſion! The fact then in ſhort 'was this—my mother, who was a moſt indulgent 'miſtreſs to one ſervant, which was all we kept, was 'unwilling, I ſuppoſe, to diſturb her at her dinner; 'and therefore went herſelf to fill her tea-kettle at a

'well,

'well, into which, ſtretching herſelf too far, as we 'imagined, the water then being very low, ſhe fell 'with the tea-kettle in her hand. The miſſing this, 'gave the poor old wretch the firſt hint of her ſuſ-'picion, which, upon examination, was found to 'be too well grounded.

'What we all ſuffered on this occaſion may more 'eaſily be felt than deſcribed.'—"It may indeed," anſwered Amelia, "and I am ſo ſenſible of it, that "unleſs you have a mind to ſee me faint before your "face, I beg you will order me ſomething—a glaſs "of water, if you pleaſe." Mrs. Bennet immediately complied with her friend's requeſt; a glaſs of water was brought, and ſome hartſhorn drops infuſed into it; which Amelia having drank off, declared ſhe found herſelf much better; and then Mrs. Bennet proceeded thus:

'I will not dwell on a ſcene which I ſee hath al-'ready ſo much affected your tender heart, and which 'is as diſagreeable to me to relate, as it can be to 'you to hear. I will, therefore, only mention to you 'the behaviour of my father on this occaſion, which 'was indeed becoming a philoſopher and a chriſtian 'divine. On the day after my mother's funeral, he 'ſent for my ſiſter and myſelf into his room; where, 'after many careſſes, and every demonſtration of fa-'therly tenderneſs, as well in ſilence as in words, he 'began to exhort us to bear with patience the great 'calamity that had befallen us; ſaying—"That as "every human accident, how terrible ſoever, muſt "happen to us by divine permiſſion at leaſt, a due "ſenſe of our duty to our great creator, muſt teach "us an abſolute ſubmiſſion to his will. Not only re-"ligion, but common ſenſe muſt teach us this; for "oh! my dear children," cries he, "how vain is all "reſiſtance, all repining! Could tears waſh back "again my angel from the grave, I ſhould drain all "the juices of my body through my eyes; but, oh! "could we fill up that curſed well with our tears, "how fruitleſs would be all our ſorrow!"—'I think 'I repeat you his very words: for the impreſſion they 'made on me is never to be obliterated.—He then

'proceeded to comfort us with the chearful thought
'that the loſs was entirely our own, and that my mo-
'ther was greatly a gainer by the accident which we
'lamented. "I have a wife," cries he, "my
"children, and you have a mother now amongſt the
"heavenly choir: how ſelfiſh, therefore, is all our
"grief! how cruel to her are all our wiſhes!"—In
'this manner he talked to us near half an hour,
'though I muſt frankly own to you, his arguments
'had not the immediate good effect on us which they
'deſerved: for we retired from him very little the
'better for his exhortations; however, they became
'every day more and more forcible upon our recol-
'lection; indeed, they were greatly ſtrengthened by
'his example: for in this, as in all other inſtances,
'he practiſed the doctrines which he taught. From
'this day he never mentioned my mother more, and
'ſoon after recovered his uſual chearfulneſs in pub-
'lic; though I have reaſon to think he paid many a
'bitter ſigh in private to that remembrance, which
'neither philoſophy nor chriſtianity could expunge.

'My father's advice, enforced by his example, to-
'gether with the kindneſs of ſome of our friends, aſ-
'ſiſted by that ableſt of all the mental phyſicians, time,
'in a few months pretty well reſtored my tranquillity,
'when fortune made a ſecond attack on my quiet.
'My ſiſter, whom I dearly loved, and who as warmly
'returned my affection, had fallen into an ill ſtate of
'health ſome time before the fatal accident which I
'have related. She was indeed at that time ſo much
'better, that we had great hopes of her perfect re-
'covery; but the diſorders of her mind on that dread-
'ful occaſion ſo affected her body, that ſhe preſently
'relapſed to her former declining ſtate, and thence
'grew continually worſe and worſe, till after a decay
'of near ſeven months, ſhe followed my poor mo-
'ther to the grave.

'I will not tire you, dear madam, with repetitions
'of grief; I will only mention two obſervations which
'have occurred to me from reflexions on the two
'loſſes I have mentioned. The firſt is, that a mind
'once violently hurt grows, as it were, callous to any

'future

'future impreſſions of grief; and is never capable of 'feeling the ſame pangs a ſecond time. The other 'obſervation is, that the arrows of fortune, as well 'as all others, derive their force from the velocity 'with which they are diſcharged: for when they ap-'proach you by ſlow and perceptible degrees they 'have but very little power to do you miſchief.

'The truth of theſe obſervations I experienced, not 'only in my own heart, but in the behaviour of my 'father, whoſe philoſophy ſeemed to gain a complete 'triumph over this latter calamity.

'Our family was now reduced to two; and my fa-'ther grew extremely fond of me, as if he had now 'conferred an entire ſtock of affection on me, that had 'before been divided. His words indeed teſtified no 'leſs: for he daily called me his only darling, his 'whole comfort, his all. He committed the whole 'charge of his houſe to my care, and gave me the 'name of his little houſe keeper, an appellation of 'which I was then as proud as any miniſter of ſtate 'can be of his titles. But though I was very induſtrious 'in the diſcharge of my occupation, I did not, how-'ever, neglect my ſtudies, in which I had made ſo 'great a proficiency, that I was become a pretty good 'miſtreſs of the Latin language, and had made ſome 'progreſs in the Greek. I believe, madam, I have 'formerly acquainted you, that learning was the 'chief eſtate I inherited of my father, in which he 'had inſtructed me from my earlieſt youth.

'The kindneſs of this good man had at length 'wiped off the remembrance of all loſſes; and I, dur-'ing two years, led a life of great tranquillity; I 'think I might almoſt ſay of perfect happineſs.

'I was now in the nineteenth year of my age, when 'my father's good fortune removed us from the 'county of Eſſex into Hampſhire, where a living 'was conferred on him, by one of his old ſchool-'fellows, of twice the value of what he was before 'poſſeſſed of.

'His predeceſſor in this new living had died in 'very indifferent circumſtances, and had left behind 'him a widow with two ſmall children. My father,

'therefore, who, with great œconomy, had a moſt 'generous ſoul, bought the whole furniture of the 'parſonage-houſe at a very high price; ſome of it, 'indeed, he would have wanted: for though our little 'habitation in Eſſex was moſt completely furniſhed, 'yet it bore no proportion to the [illegible]neſs of that 'houſe in which he was now to dwell.

'His motive, however, to the purchaſe was, I am 'convinced, ſolely generoſity; which appeared ſuf-'ficiently by the price he gave, and may be further 'enforced by the kindneſs he ſhowed the widow in an-'other inſtance: for he aſſigned her an apartment for 'the uſe of herſelf and her little family; which he 'told her ſhe was welcome to enjoy as long as it 'ſuited her conveniency.

'As this widow was very young, and generally 'thought to be tolerably pretty, though I own ſhe had 'a caſt with her eyes which I never liked, my father, 'you may ſuppoſe, acted from a leſs noble principle 'than I have hinted: but I muſt in juſtice acquit 'him; for theſe kind offers were made her before 'ever he had ſeen her face; and I have the greateſt 'reaſon to think, that, for a long time after he had 'ſeen her, he beheld her with much indifference.

'This act of my father's gave me, when I firſt heard 'it, great ſatisfaction: for I may, at leaſt, with the 'modeſty of the ancient philoſophers, call myſelf a 'lover of generoſity; but, when I became acquainted 'with the widow, I was ſtill more delighted with 'what my father had done: for, though I could not 'agree with thoſe who thought her a conſummate 'beauty, I muſt allow that ſhe was very fully poſ-'ſeſſed of the power of making herſelf agreeable; 'and this power ſhe exerted with ſo much ſucceſs, 'with ſuch indefatigable induſtry to oblige, that 'within three months I became in the higheſt manner 'pleaſed with my new acquaintance, and had con-'tracted the moſt ſincere friendſhip for her.

'But if I was ſo pleaſed with the widow, my father 'was by this time enamoured of her. She had, in-'deed, by the moſt artful conduct in the world, ſo 'inſinuated herſelf into his favour, ſo entirely infa-

'tuated him, that he never ſhowed the leaſt 'marks of chearfulneſs in her abſence, and could, 'in truth, ſcarce bear that ſhe ſhould be out of his 'ſight.

'She had managed this matter ſo well (O! ſhe is 'the moſt artful of women!) my father's heart 'was gone before I ever ſuſpected it was in danger. 'The diſcovery, you may eaſily believe, madam, 'was not pleaſing. The name of a mother-in-law 'ſounded dreadful in my ears, nor could I bear the 'thought of parting again with a ſhare in thoſe dear 'affections, of which I had purchaſed the whole by 'the loſs of a beloved mother and ſiſter.

'In the firſt hurry and diſorder of my mind on this 'occaſion, I committed a crime of the higheſt kind 'againſt all the laws of prudence and diſcretion. I 'took the young lady herſelf very roundly to task; 'treated her deſigns on my father as little better than 'a deſign to commit a theft; and in my paſſion, I 'believe, ſaid ſhe might be aſhamed to think of mar-'rying a man old enough to be her grandfather: for 'ſo in reality he almoſt was.

'The lady, on this occaſion, acted finely the part of 'a hypocrite. She affected to be highly affronted 'at my unjuſt ſuſpicions, as ſhe called them, and pro-'ceeded to ſuch aſſeverations of her innocence, that 'ſhe almoſt brought me to diſcredit the evidence 'of my own eyes and ears.

'My father, however, acted much more honeſtly: 'for he fell the next day into a more violent paſſion 'with me than I had ever ſeen him in before, and 'aſked me, whether I intended to return his paternal 'fondneſs by aſſuming the right of controlling his 'inclinations, with more of the like kind, which fully 'convinced me what had paſſed between him and 'the lady, and how little I had injured her in my 'ſuſpicions.

'Hitherto, I frankly own my averſion to this match 'had been principally on my own account; for I had 'no ill opinion of the woman, though I thought nei-'ther her circumſtances, nor my father's age, promiſed 'any kind of felicity from ſuch an union; but, now I

'learnt ſome particulars, which, had not our quarrel 'become public in the pariſh, I ſhould, perhaps, 'have never known. In ſhort, I was informed, that 'this gentle obliging creature, as ſhe had at firſt ap- 'peared to me, had the ſpirit of a tigreſs, and was 'by many believed to have broken the heart of her 'firſt huſband.

'The truth of this matter being confirmed to me 'upon examination, I reſolved not to ſuppreſs it. 'On this occaſion fortune ſeemed to favour me, by 'giving me a ſpeedy opportunity of ſeeing my father 'alone and in good humour. He now firſt began to 'open his intended marriage, telling me that he had 'formerly had ſome religious objections to bigamy, 'but he had very fully conſidered the matter, and 'had ſatisfied himſelf of its legality. He then faith- 'fully promiſed me, that no ſecond marriage ſhould 'in the leaſt impair his affection for me; and con- 'cluded with the higheſt eulogiums on the goodneſs 'of the widow, proteſting that it was her virtues and 'not her perſon with which he was enamoured.

'I now fell upon my knees before him, and bath- 'ing his hand in my tears, which flowed very plen- 'tifully from my eyes, acquainted him with all I 'had heard; and was ſo very imprudent, I might 'almoſt ſay ſo cruel, to diſcloſe the author of my 'information.

'My father heard me without any indication of 'paſſion; and anſwered coldly, that if there was any 'proof of ſuch facts, he ſhould decline any further 'thoughts of this match. "But child," ſaid he, "though I am far from ſuſpecting the truth of what "you tell me, as far as regards your knowledge; yet "you know the inclination of the world to ſlander." 'However, before we parted, he promiſed to make a 'proper enquiry into what I had told him.—But I 'aſk your pardon, dear madam, I am running mi- 'nutely into thoſe particulars of my life, in which 'you have not the leaſt concern.'

Amelia ſtopped her friend ſhort in her apology, and though, perhaps, ſhe thought her impertinent enough, yet (ſuch was her good breeding) ſhe gave her many aſſurances

assurances of a curiosity to know every incident of her life which she could remember; after which, Mrs. Bennet proceeded as in the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

Continuation of Mrs. Bennet's *story.*

'I Think, madam,' said Mrs. Bennet, 'I told you 'my father promised me to enquire farther into 'the affair; but he had hardly time to keep his 'word; for we separated pretty late in the evening, 'and early the next morning he was married to the 'widow.

'But, though he gave no credit to my information, 'I had sufficient reason to think he did not forget it, 'by the resentment which he soon discovered to both 'the persons whom I had named as my informers.

'Nor was it long before I had good cause to be-'lieve, that my father's new wife was perfectly well 'acquainted with the good opinion I had of her, 'not only from her usage of me, but from certain 'hints, which she threw forth with an air of triumph. 'One day particularly, I remember she said to my fa-'ther, upon his mentioning his age, "O, my dear, "I hope you have many years yet to live; unless, in-"deed, I should be so cruel as to break your heart." 'She spoke these words, looking me full in the 'face, and accompanied them with a sneer, in 'which the highest malice was visible, under a thin 'covering of affected pleasantry.

'I will not entertain you, madam, with any thing 'so common as the cruel usage of a step-mother; nor 'of what affected me much more, the unkind beha-'viour of a father under such an influence. It shall 'suffice only to tell you, that I had the mortification 'to perceive the gradual and daily decrease of my fa-'ther's affection. His smiles were converted into 'frowns; the tender appellations of child, and dear 'were exchanged for plain Molly, that girl, that 'creature, and sometimes much harder names. I was 'at first turned all at once into a cypher, and at last 'seemed to be considered as a nuisance in the family.

'Thus altered was the man of whom I gave you 'ſuch a character at the entrance on my ſtory; but, 'alas! he no longer acted from his own excellent diſ- 'poſition; but was in every thing governed and di- 'rected by my mother-in-law. In fact, whenever 'there is great diſparity of years between huſband and 'wife, the younger is, I believe, always poſſeſſed of 'abſolute power over the elder: for ſuperſtition it- 'ſelf is a leſs firm ſupport of abſolute power than 'dotage.

'But though his wife was ſo entirely miſtreſs of my 'father's will that ſhe could make him uſe me ill, 'ſhe could not ſo perfectly ſubdue his underſtanding 'as to prevent him from being conſcious of ſuch ill 'uſage; and from this conſciouſneſs he began inve- 'terately to hate me. Of this hatred he gave me 'numberleſs inſtances, and I proteſt to you, I know 'not any other reaſon for it than what I have aſſigned; 'and the cauſe, as experience hath convinced me, is 'adequate to the effect.

'While I was in this wretched ſituation, my fa- 'ther's unkindneſs having almoſt broken my heart, 'he came one day into my room with more anger in 'his countenance than I had ever ſeen; and, after bit- 'terly upbraiding me with my undutiful behaviour 'both to himſelf and his worthy conſort, he bid me 'pack up my alls, and immediately prepare to quit 'his houſe; at the ſame time gave me a letter, and 'told me that would acquaint me where I might find 'a home; adding, that he doubted not but I ex- 'pected, and had indeed ſolicited the invitation; and 'left me with a declaration that he would have no ſpies 'in his family.

'The letter, I found on opening it, was from my 'father's own ſiſter; but, before I mention the con- 'tents, I will give you a ſhort ſketch of her character, 'as it was ſomewhat particular. Her perſonal charms 'were not great; for ſhe was very tall, very thin, and 'very homely. Of the defect of her beauty ſhe was, 'perhaps, ſenſible; her vanity therefore retreated in- 'to her mind, where there is no looking-glaſs, and 'conſequently where we can flatter ourſelves with diſ-

'covering almoſt whatever beauties we pleaſe. This 'is an encouraging circumſtance; and yet I have 'obſerved, dear Mrs. Booth, that few women ever 'ſeek theſe comforts from within, till they are driven 'to it by deſpair of finding any food for their vanity 'from without. Indeed, I believe the firſt wiſh of 'our whole ſex is to be handſome.'

Here both the ladies fixed their eyes on the glaſs, and both ſmiled.

'My aunt, however,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'from 'deſpair of gaining any applauſe this way, had ap-'plied herſelf entirely to the contemplation of her 'underſtanding, and had improved this to ſuch a 'pitch, that at the age of fifty, at which ſhe was 'now arrived, ſhe had contracted a hearty contempt 'for much the greater part of both ſexes; for the 'women, as being ideots, and for the men, as the 'admirers of ideots. That word and fool were al-'moſt conſtantly in her mouth, and were beſtowed 'with great liberality among all her acquaintance.

'This lady had ſpent one day only at my father's 'houſe in near two years. It was about a month be-'fore his ſecond marriage. At her departure ſhe 'took occaſion to whiſper me her opinion of the 'widow, whom ſhe called a pretty ideot, and won-'dered how her brother could bear ſuch company 'under his roof; for neither ſhe nor I had at that 'time any ſuſpicion of what afterwards happened.

'The letter which my father had juſt received, 'and which was the firſt ſhe had ſent him ſince his 'marriage, was of ſuch a nature, that I ſhould be 'unjuſt if I blamed him for being offended; fool 'and ideot were both plentifully beſtowed in it, as 'well on himſelf as on his wife. But what, perhaps, 'had principally offended him, was that part which 'related to me: for after much panegyric on my 'underſtanding, and ſaying he was unworthy of ſuch 'a daughter, ſhe conſidered his match not only as 'the higheſt indiſcretion, as it related to himſelf, 'but as a downright act of injuſtice to me. One 'expreſſion in it I ſhall never forget. "You have "placed," ſaid ſhe, "a woman above your daugh-

"ter,

" ter, who, in underſtanding, the only valuable " gift of nature, is the loweſt in the whole claſs of " pretty ideots." After much more of this kind, ' it concluded with inviting me to her houſe.

' I can truly ſay, that, when I had read the letter, ' I entirely forgave my father's ſuſpicion, that I had ' made ſome complaints to my aunt of his beha- ' viour; for, though I was indeed innocent, there was ' ſurely colour enough to ſuſpect the contrary.

' Though I had never been greatly attached to ' my aunt, nor indeed had ſhe formerly given me ' any reaſon for ſuch an attachment; yet I was well ' enough pleaſed with her preſent invitation. To ' ſay the truth, I led ſo wretched a life where I then ' was, that it was impoſſible not to be a gainer by ' any exchange.

' I could not, however, bear the thoughts of ' leaving my father with an impreſſion on his mind ' againſt me which I did not deſerve. I endeavour- ' ed, therefore, to remove all his ſuſpicion of my ' having complained to my aunt by the moſt earneſt ' aſſeverations of my innocence; but they were all to ' no purpoſe. All my tears, all my vows, and all ' my entreaties were fruitleſs. My new mother in- ' deed appeared to be my advocate; but ſhe acted ' her part very poorly, and, far from counterfeiting ' any deſire of ſucceeding in my ſuit, ſhe could not ' conceal the exceſſive joy which ſhe felt on the oc- ' caſion.

' Well, madam, the next day I departed for my ' aunt's, where, after a long journey of forty miles, ' I arrived without having once broke my faſt on ' the road: for grief is as capable as food of filling ' the ſtomach; and I had too much of the former ' to admit any of the latter. The fatigue of my ' journey, and the agitation of my mind, joined to ' my faſting, ſo overpowered my ſpirits, that when ' I was taken from my horſe, I immediately fainted ' away in the arms of the man who helped me ' from my ſaddle. My aunt expreſſed great aſto- ' niſhment at ſeeing me in this condition, with my ' eyes almoſt ſwollen out of my head with tears;

' but

'but my father's letter, which I delivered her ſoon 'after I came to myſelf, pretty well, I believe, 'cured her ſurprize. She often ſmiled with a mixture 'of contempt and anger, while ſhe was reading it; 'and having pronounced her brother to be a fool, 'ſhe turned to me, and with as much affability as 'poſſible (for ſhe is no great miſtreſs of affability) 'ſaid, "Don't be uneaſy, dear Molly; for you are "come to the houſe of a friend; of one who hath "ſenſe enough to diſcern the author of all the miſ-"chief: depend upon it, child, I will ere long make "ſome people aſhamed of their folly." This kind 'reception gave me ſome comfort, my aunt aſſuring 'me that ſhe would convince him how unjuſtly he 'had accuſed me of having made any complaints to 'her. A paper war was now begun between theſe 'two, which not only fixed an irreconcileable hatred 'between them; but confirmed my father's diſplea-'ſure againſt me, and in the end, I believe, did me 'no ſervice with my aunt; for I was conſidered by 'both as the cauſe of their diſſenſion; though in 'fact my ſtep-mother, who very well knew the af-'fection my aunt had for her, had long ſince done 'her buſineſs with my father; and as for my aunt's 'affection towards him, it had been abating ſeveral 'years, from an apprehenſion that he did not pay 'ſufficient deference to her underſtanding.

'I had lived about half a year with my aunt, 'when I heard of my ſtep-mother's being delivered 'of a boy, and the great joy my father expreſſed 'on that occaſion; but, poor man, he lived not 'long to enjoy his happineſs; for within a month 'afterwards I had the melancholy news of his death.

'Notwithſtanding all the diſobligations I had lately 'received from him, I was ſincerely afflicted at my 'loſs of him. All his kindneſs to me in my infancy, 'all his kindneſs to me while I was growing up, re-'curred to my memory, raiſed a thouſand tender, 'melancholy ideas, and totally obliterated all thoughts 'of his latter behaviour, for which I made alſo every 'allowance and every excuſe in my power.

'But

'But what may perhaps appear more extraordinary, my aunt began ſoon to ſpeak of him with concern. She ſaid he had ſome underſtanding formerly, though his paſſion for that vile woman had in a great meaſure obſcured it; and one day, when ſhe was in an ill humour with me, ſhe had the cruelty to throw out a hint, that ſhe had never quarrelled with her brother if it had not been on my account.

'My father, during his life, had allowed my aunt very handſomely for my board; for generoſity was too deeply riveted in his nature to be plucked out by all the power of his wife. So far, however, ſhe prevailed, that though he died poſſeſſed of upwards of 2000*l.* he left me no more than 100*l.* which, as he expreſſed in his will, was to ſet me up in ſome buſineſs, if I had the grace to take to any.

'Hitherto, my aunt had in general treated me with ſome degree of affection; but her behaviour began now to be changed. She ſoon took an opportunity of giving me to underſtand, that her fortune was inſufficient to keep me: and, as I could not live on the intereſt of my own, it was high time for me to conſider about going into the world. She added, that her brother having mentioned my ſetting up in ſome buſineſs, in his will, was very fooliſh; that I had been bred to nothing; and beſides, that the ſum was too trifling to ſet me up in any way of reputation; ſhe deſired me therefore to think of immediately going into ſervice.

'This advice was perhaps right enough; and I told her I was very ready to do as ſhe directed me but I was at that time in an ill ſtate of health: I deſired her therefore to let me ſtay with her till my legacy, which was not to be paid till a year after my father's death, was due; and I then promiſed to ſatisfy her for my board; to which ſhe readily conſented.

'And now, madam,' ſaid Mrs. Bennet ſighing, 'I am going to open to you thoſe matters which lead directly to that great caſtrophe of my life, which

'hath

'hath occaſioned my giving you this trouble, and of 'trying your patience in this manner.'

Amelia, notwithſtanding her impatience, made a very civil anſwer to this; and then Mrs. Bennet proceeded to relate what is written in the next chapter.

CHAP IV.

Further Continuation.

'THE curate of the pariſh where my aunt dwelt 'was a young fellow of about four-and-twenty. 'He had been left an orphan in his infancy, and en-'tirely unprovided for; when an uncle had the good-'neſs to take care of his education, both at ſchool 'and at the univerſity. As the young gentleman 'was intended for the church, his uncle, though he 'had two daughters of his own, and no very large 'fortune, purchaſed for him the next preſentation of 'a living of near 200l. a year. The incumbent, at 'the time of the purchaſe, was under the age of ſixty, 'and in apparent good health; notwithſtanding which 'he died ſoon after the bargain, and long before the 'nephew was capable of orders; ſo that the uncle 'was obliged to give the living to a clergyman, to 'hold it till the young man came of proper age.

'The young gentleman had not attained his pro-'per age of taking orders when he had the misfor-'tune to loſe his uncle and only friend; who, think-'ing he had ſufficiently provided for his nephew by 'the purchaſe of the living, conſidered him no fur-'ther in his will, but divided all the fortune of which 'he died poſſeſſed between his two daughters; re-'commending it to them, however, on his death-bed, 'to aſſiſt their couſin with money ſufficient to keep 'him at the univerſity, till he ſhould be capable of 'ordination.

'But, as no appointment of this kind was in the 'will, the young ladies, who received about 2000l. 'each, thought proper to diſregard the laſt words of 'their father: for, beſides that both of them were 'extremely tenacious of their money, they were great 'enemies to their couſin, on account of their father's

'kindneſs

'kindneſs to him, and thought proper to let him 'know that they thought he had robbed them of too 'much already.

'The poor young fellow was now greatly diſtreſſed; 'for he had yet above a year to ſtay at the univer- 'ſity, without any viſible means of ſuſtaining himſelf 'there.

'In this diſtreſs, however, he met with a friend, 'who had the good-nature to lend him the ſum of 'twenty pounds, for which he only accepted his bond 'for forty, and which was to be paid within a year 'after his being poſſeſſed of his living; that is, within 'a year after his becoming qualified to hold it.

'With this ſmall ſum, thus hardly obtained, the 'poor gentleman made a ſhift to ſtruggle with all 'difficulties, till he became of due age to take upon 'himſelf the character of a deacon. He then re- 'paired to that clergyman, to whom his uncle had 'given the living upon the conditions above-men- 'tioned, to procure a title to ordination; but this, 'to his great ſurprize and mortification, was abſo- 'lutely refuſed him.

'The immediate diſappointment did not hurt him 'ſo much as the concluſion he drew from it: for 'he could have but little hopes, that the man who 'could have the cruelty to refuſe him a title, would 'vouchſafe afterwards to deliver up to him a living 'of ſo conſiderable a value; nor was it long before 'this worthy incumbent told him plainly, that he 'valued his uncle's favours at too high a rate to part 'with them to any one; nay, he pretended ſcruples 'of conſcience, and ſaid, that if he had made any 'ſlight promiſes, which he did not now well remem- 'ber, they were wicked and void; that he looked 'upon himſelf as married to his pariſh, and he could 'no more give it up, than he could give up his wife, 'without ſin.

'The poor young fellow was now obliged to ſeek 'farther for a title, which at length he obtained from 'the rector of the pariſh where my aunt lived.

'He had not long been ſettled in the curacy, be- 'fore an intimate acquaintance grew between him

'and

'and my aunt: for ſhe was a great admirer of the 'clergy, and uſed frequently to ſay they were the 'only converſable creatures in the country.

'The firſt time ſhe was in this gentleman's com-'pany was at a neighbour's chriſtening, where ſhe 'ſtood god-mother. Here ſhe diſplayed her whole 'little ſtock of knowledge, in order to captivate Mr. 'Bennet (I ſuppoſe, madam, you already gueſs that 'to have been his name) and before they parted, 'gave him a very ſtrong invitation to her houſe.

'Not a word paſſed at this chriſtening between 'Mr. Bennet and myſelf; but our eyes were not 'unemployed. Here, madam, I firſt felt a pleaſing 'kind of confuſion, which I know not how to de-'ſcribe I felt a kind of uneaſineſs; yet did not 'wiſh to be without it. I longed to be alone; yet 'dreaded the hour of parting. I could not keep my 'eyes off from the object which cauſed my confuſion, 'and which I was at once afraid of and enamoured 'with.—But, why do I attempt to deſcribe my ſi-'tuation to one who muſt, I am ſure, have felt the 'ſame?

Amelia ſmiled, and Mrs. Bennet went on thus, 'O, Mrs. Booth, had you ſeen the perſon of whom 'I am now ſpeaking, you would not condemn the 'ſuddenneſs of my love. Nay, indeed, I had ſeen 'him there before, though this was the firſt time I 'had ever heard the muſic of his voice.—O! it was 'the ſweeteſt that was ever heard.

'Mr. Bennet came to viſit my aunt the very next 'day. She imputed this reſpectful haſte to the power-'ful charms of her underſtanding, and reſolved to 'loſe no opportunity in improving the opinion which 'ſhe imagined he had conceived of her. She became 'by this deſire quite ridiculous, and ran into abſur-'dities and a gallimatias ſcarce credible.

'Mr. Bennet, as I afterwards found, ſaw her in 'the ſame light with myſelf; but, as he was a very 'ſenſible and well-bred man, he ſo well concealed 'his opinion from us both, that I was almoſt angry, 'and ſhe was pleaſed even to raptures, declaring her-'ſelf charmed with his underſtanding; though indeed

'he

'he had ſaid very little; but I believe he heard him-
'ſelf into her good opinion, while he gazed himſelf
'into love.

'The two firſt viſits which Mr. Bennet made to
'my aunt, though I was in the room all the time,
'I never ſpoke a word: but on the third, on ſome
'argument which aroſe between them, Mr. Bennet
'referred himſelf to me. I took his ſide of the
'queſtion, as indeed I muſt to have done juſtice, and
'repeated two or three words of Latin. My aunt
'reddened at this, and expreſſed great diſdain of my
'opinion, declaring ſhe was aſtoniſhed that a man of
'Mr. Bennet's underſtanding could appeal to the
'judgment of a ſilly girl: Is ſhe, ſaid my aunt brid-
'ling herſelf, fit to decide between us?—Mr. Bennet
'ſpoke very favourably of what I had ſaid; upon
'which my aunt burſt almoſt into a rage, treated me
'with downright ſcurrility, called me conceited fool,
'abuſed my poor father for having taught me Latin,
'which, ſhe ſaid, had made me a downright coxcomb,
'and made me prefer myſelf to thoſe who were a hun-
'dred times my ſuperiors in knowledge. She then
'fell foul on the learned languages, declared they
'were totally uſeleſs, and concluded that ſhe had
'read all that was worth reading, though ſhe thank-
'ed heaven ſhe underſtood no language but her own.

'Before the end of his viſit, Mr. Bennet reconciled
'himſelf very well to my aunt, which, indeed, was
'no difficult taſk for him to accompliſh; but from
'that hour ſhe conceived a hatred and rancour to-
'wards me which I could never appeaſe.

'My aunt had, from my firſt coming into her
'houſe, expreſſed great diſlike to my learning. In
'plain truth, ſhe envied me that advantage. This
'envy I had long ago diſcovered; and had taken
'great pains to ſmother it, carefully avoiding ever to
'mention a Latin word in her preſence, and always
'ſubmitting to her authority; for indeed I deſpiſed
'her ignorance too much to diſpute with her. By
'theſe means I had pretty well ſucceeded, and we
'lived tolerably together. But the affront paid to
'*her underſtanding* by Mr. Bennet in my favour was

'an

'an injury never to be forgiven to me. She took me 'ſeverely to taſk that very evening, and reminded me 'of going to ſervice, in ſuch earneſt terms as almoſt 'amounted to literally turning me out of doors; ad-'viſing me, in the moſt inſulting manner, to keep 'my Latin to myſelf; which, ſhe ſaid, was uſeleſs to 'any one; but ridiculous, when pretended to by a 'ſervant.

'The next viſit Mr. Bennet made at our houſe, 'I was not ſuffered to be preſent. This was much 'the ſhorteſt of all his viſits; and, when he went 'away, he left my aunt in a worſe humour than 'ever I had ſeen her. The whole was diſcharged 'on me in the uſual manner, by upbraiding me with 'my learning, conceit, and poverty; reminding me 'of obligations, and inſiſting on my going imme-'diately to ſervice. With all this I was greatly 'pleaſed, as it aſſured me that Mr. Bennet had ſaid 'ſomething to her in my favour; and I would have 'purchaſed a kind expreſſion of his at almoſt any 'price.

'I ſhould ſcarce, however, have been ſo ſanguine 'as to draw this concluſion, had I not received ſome 'hints, that I had not unhappily placed my affections 'on a man who made me no return: for though he 'had ſcarce addreſſed a dozen ſentences to me (for, 'indeed, he had no opportunity) yet his eyes had re-'vealed certain ſecrets to mine, with which I was not 'diſpleaſed.

'I remained, however, in a ſtate of anxiety near 'a month; ſometimes pleaſing myſelf, with thinking 'Mr. Bennet's heart was in the ſame ſituation with 'my own; ſometimes doubting that my wiſhes had 'flattered and deceived me; and not in the leaſt 'queſtioning that my aunt was my rival: for I 'thought no woman could be proof againſt the charms 'that had ſubdued me. Indeed, Mrs. Booth, he was 'a charming young fellow: I muſt—I muſt pay this 'tribute to his memory—O gracious heaven! why, 'why did I ever ſee him! why was I doomed to ſuch 'miſery!'—Here ſhe burſt into a flood of tears, and remained incapable of ſpeech for ſome time; during

which, the gentle Amelia endeavoured all ſhe could to ſooth her; and gave ſufficient marks of ſympathizing in the tender affliction of her friend.

Mrs. Bennet, at length, recovered her ſpirits, and proceeded, as in the next chapter.

CHAP. V.

The Story of Mrs. Bennet *continued.*

'I Scarce know where I left off.—O! I was, I think, telling you, that I eſteemed my aunt as my rival; and it is not eaſy to conceive a greater degree of deteſtation than I had for her; and what may perhaps appear ſtrange, as ſhe daily grew more and more civil to me, my hatred increaſed with her civility; for I imputed it all to her triumph over me, and to her having ſecured, beyond all apprehenſion, the heart I longed for.

'How was I ſurpriſed, when one day, with as much good humour as ſhe was miſtreſs of (for her countenance was not very pleaſing) ſhe asked me, how I liked Mr. Bennet? The queſtion, you will believe, madam, threw me into great confuſion; which ſhe plainly perceived, and without waiting for my anſwer told me, ſhe was very well ſatisfied; for that it did not require her diſcernment to read my thoughts in my countenance. "Well, child," ſaid ſhe, "I have ſuſpected this a great while, and "I believe it will pleaſe you to know, that I yeſterday made the ſame diſcovery in your lover." This, I confeſs to you, was more than I could well bear, and I begged her to ſay no more to me at that time, on that ſubject.—"Nay, child," anſwered ſhe, "I muſt tell you all, or I ſhould not act a friendly "part. Mr. Bennet, I am convinced, hath a paſſion "for you; but it is a paſſion which I think you ſhould "not encourage. For, to be plain with you, I fear "he is in love with your perſon only. Now, this is a "love child, which cannot produce that rational "happineſs which a woman of ſenſe ought to expect."—In ſhort, ſhe ran on with a great deal of ſtuff about rational happineſs, and women of ſenſe,

'and

'and concluded with aſſuring me, that, after the 'ſtricteſt ſcrutiny, ſhe could not find that Mr. Bennet 'had an adequate opinion of my underſtanding; 'upon which ſhe vouchſafed to make me many com- 'pliments, but mixed with ſeveral ſarcaſms concern- 'ing my learning.

'I hope, madam, however,' ſaid ſhe to Amelia, 'you have not ſo bad an opinion of my capacity, 'as to imagine me dull enough to be offended with 'Mr. Bennet's ſentiments; for which I preſently 'knew ſo well to account. I was, indeed, charmed 'with his ingenuity, who had diſcovered, perhaps, 'the only way of reconciling my aunt to to thoſe in- 'clinations, which I now aſſured myſelf he had for 'me.'

'I was not long left to ſupport my hopes by my 'ſagacity. He ſoon found an opportunity of declar- 'ing his paſſion. He did this in ſo forcible, though 'gentle, a manner, with ſuch a profuſion of fervency 'and tenderneſs at once, that his love, like a torrent, 'bore every thing before it; and I am almoſt aſhamed 'to own to you, how very ſoon he prevailed upon me 'to—to—in ſhort, to be an honeſt woman, and to 'confeſs to him the plain truth.

'When we were upon a good footing together, 'he gave me a long relation of what had paſſed at 'ſeveral interviews with my aunt, at which I had 'not been preſent. He ſaid, he had diſcovered, that 'as ſhe valued herſelf chiefly on her underſtanding, 'ſo ſhe was extremely jealous of mine, and hated 'me on account of my learning. That as he had 'loved me paſſionately from his firſt ſeeing me, and 'had thought of nothing, from that time, but of 'throwing himſelf at my feet, he ſaw no way ſo open 'to propitiate my aunt as that which he had taken, 'by commending my beauty; a perfection to which 'ſhe had long reſigned all claim, at the expence of 'my underſtanding, in which he lamented my de- 'ficiency to a degree almoſt of ridicule. This he 'imputed chiefly to my learning; on this occaſion 'he advanced a ſentiment which ſo pleaſed my aunt, 'that ſhe thought proper to make it her own; for

'I heard

'I heard it afterwards more than once from her own 'mouth. Learning, he ſaid, had the ſame effect on 'the mind, that ſtrong liquors have on the conſtitu- 'tion; both tending to eradicate all our natural fire 'and energy. His flattery had made ſuch a dupe of 'my aunt, that ſhe aſſented, without the leaſt ſuſ- 'picion of his ſincerity, to all he ſaid; ſo ſure is 'vanity to weaken every fortreſs of the under- 'ſtanding, and ſo betray us to every attack of the 'enemy.'

'You will believe, madam, that I readily forgave 'him all he had ſaid, not only from that motive 'which I have mentioned, but as I was aſſured he 'had ſpoke the reverſe of his real ſentiments. I was 'not, however, quite ſo well pleaſed with my aunt, 'who began to treat me as if I was really an ideot. 'Her contempt, I own, a little piqued me; and I 'could not help often expreſſing my reſentment, 'when we were alone together, to Mr. Bennet; who 'never failed to gratify me, by making her conceit 'the ſubject of his wit; a talent which he poſſeſſed 'in the moſt extraordinary degree.

'This proved of very fatal conſequence: for one 'day, while we were enjoying my aunt in a very 'thick arbour in the garden, ſhe ſtole upon us un- 'obſerved, and overheard our whole converſation. 'I wiſh, my dear, you underſtood Latin, that I might 'repeat you a ſentence, in which the rage of a tigreſs, 'that hath loſt her young, is deſcribed. No Engliſh 'poet, as I remember, hath come up to it; nor am 'I myſelf equal to the undertaking. She burſt in 'upon us, open-mouthed, and after diſcharging every 'abuſive word almoſt, in the only language ſhe un- 'derſtood, on poor Mr. Bennet, turned us both out 'of doors; declaring, ſhe would ſend my rags after 'me, but would never more permit me to ſet my foot 'within her threſhold.

'Conſider, dear madam, to what a wretched con- 'dition we were now reduced. I had not yet received 'the ſmall legacy left me by my father; nor was 'Mr. Bennet maſter of five pounds in the whole 'world.

'In

'In this situation, the man I doated on to distraction had but little difficulty to persuade me to a proposal, which, indeed, I thought generous in him to make, as it seemed to proceed from that tenderness for my reputation to which he ascribed it; indeed, it could proceed from no motive with which I should have been displeased.—In a word, within two days we were man and wife.

'Mr. Bennet now declared himself the happiest of men; and, for my part, I sincerely declare, I envied no woman upon earth.—How little, alas! did I then know, or suspect, the price I was to pay for all my joys. A match of real love is, indeed, truly paradise; and such perfect happiness seems to be the forbidden fruit to mortals, which we are to lament having tasted during the rest of our lives.

'The first uneasiness which attacked us after our marriage was on my aunt's account. It was very disagreeable to live under the nose of so near a relation, who did not acknowledge us; but, on the contrary, was ever doing us all the ill turns in her power; and making a party against us in the parish, which is always easy enough to do amongst the vulgar, against persons who are their superiors in rank, and, at the same time, their inferiors in fortune. This made Mr. Bennet think of procuring an exchange, in which intention he was soon after confirmed by the arrival of the rector. It was the rector's custom to spend three months every year at his living; for which purpose he reserved an apartment in his parsonage-house, which was full large enough for two such little families as then occupied it: we, at first promised ourselves some little convenience from his boarding with us; and Mr. Bennet began to lay aside the thoughts of leaving his curacy, at least for some time. But these golden ideas presently vanished; for, though we both used our utmost endeavours to please him, we soon found the impossibility of succeeding. He was, indeed, to give you his character in a word, the most peevish of mortals. This temper, notwithstanding that he was both a good and a pious man

'made his company ſo inſufferable, that nothing 'could compenſate it. If his breakfaſt was not ready 'to a moment; if a diſh of meat was too much or 'too little done; in ſhort, if any thing failed of ex-'actly hitting his taſte, he was ſure to be out of hu-'mour all that day; ſo that, indeed, he was ſcarce 'ever in a good temper a whole day together: for 'fortune ſeems to take a delight in thwarting this 'kind of diſpoſition, to which human life, with its 'many croſſes and accidents, is in truth by no means 'fitted.

'Mr. Bennet was now, by my deſire, as well as 'his own, determined to quit the pariſh; but when 'he attempted to get an exchange, he found it a 'matter of more difficulty than he had apprehend-'ed; for the rector's temper was ſo well known 'among the neighbouring clergy, that none of them 'could be brought to think of ſpending three months 'in a year with him.

'After many fruitleſs enquiries, Mr. Bennet thought 'beſt to remove to London, the great mart of all 'affairs eccleſiaſtical and civil. This project greatly 'pleaſed him; and he reſolved, without more delay, 'to take his leave of the rector; which he did in the 'moſt friendly manner poſſible, and preached his 'farewell ſermon; nor was there a dry eye in the 'church, except among the few whom my aunt, who 'remained ſtill inexorable, had prevailed upon to hate 'us without any cauſe.

'To London we came, and took up our lodging 'the firſt night at the inn where the ſtage coach ſet 'us down; the next morning my huſband went out 'early on his buſineſs, and returned with the good 'news of having heard of a curacy, and of having 'equipped himſelf with a lodging in the neighbour-'hood of a worthy peer, who, ſaid he, was my fel-'low collegiate; and what is more, I have a direction 'to a perſon who will advance your legacy at a very 'reaſonable rate.

'This laſt particular was extremly agreeable to 'me; for our laſt guinea was now broached; and the 'rector had lent my huſband ten pounds to pay his

'debts in the country: for with all his peeviſhneſs 'he was a good and a generous man, and had indeed 'ſo many valuable qualities, that I lamented his tem- 'per, after I knew him thoroughly, as much on his 'account, as on my own.

'We now quitted the inn, and went to our lodg- 'ings, where my huſband having placed me in ſafe- 'ty, as he ſaid, he went about the buſineſs of the le- 'gacy, with good aſſurance of ſucceſs.

'My huſband returned elated with his ſucceſs, the 'perſon to whom he applied having undertaken to 'advance the legacy, which he fulfilled as ſoon as the 'proper enquiries could be made, and proper inſtru- 'ments prepared for that purpoſe.

'This, however, took up ſo much time, that, as 'our fund was ſo very low, we were reduced to ſome 'diſtreſs, and obliged to live extremely penurious; 'nor would all do, without my taking a moſt diſ- 'agreeable way of procuring money, by pawning one 'of my gowns.

'Mr. Bennet was now ſettled in a curacy in town, 'greatly to his ſatisfaction; and our affairs ſeemed to 'have a proſperous aſpect, when he came home to me 'one morning in much apparent diſorder, looking as 'pale as death, and begged me by ſome means or 'other to get him a dram; for that he was taken with 'a ſudden faintneſs and lowneſs of ſpirits.

'Frighted as I was, I immediately ran down ſtairs, 'and procured ſome rum of the miſtreſs of the houſe; 'the firſt time, indeed, I ever knew him drink any. 'When he came to himſelf, he begged me not to be 'alarmed; for it was no diſtemper, but ſomething 'that had vexed him, which had cauſed his diſorder, 'which he had now perfectly recovered.

'He then told me the whole affair. He had hi- 'therto deferred paying a viſit to the lord whom I 'mentioned to have been formerly his fellow collegi- 'ate, and was now his neighbour, till he could put 'himſelf in decent rigging. He had now purchaſed 'a new caſſock, hat, and wig, and went to pay his 'reſpects to his old acquaintance, who had received 'from him many civilities and aſſiſtances in his learn-

'ing at the univerſity, and had promiſed to return 'them fourfold hereafter.

'It was not without ſome difficulty that Mr. Ben-'net got into the antechamber. Here he waited, or, 'as the phraſe is, cooled his heels for above an hour 'before he ſaw his lordſhip; nor had he ſeen him 'then, but by an accident: for my lord was going 'out, when he caſually intercepted him in his paſ-'ſage to his chariot. He approached to ſalute him 'with ſome familiarity, though with ſome reſpect, 'depending on his former intimacy, when my lord, 'ſtopping ſhort, very gravely told him, he had not 'the pleaſure of knowing him. "How! my lord (ſaid "he) can you have ſo ſoon forgot your old acquaint-"ance, Tom Bennet?" "O Mr. Bennet (cries his lord-"ſhip, with much reſerve) is it you? You will par-"don my memory. I am glad to ſee you, Mr. Ben-"net; but you muſt excuſe me at preſent: for I am "in very great haſte." He then broke from him, and 'without more ceremony, or any further invitation, 'went directly into his chariot.

'This cold reception from a perſon for whom my 'huſband had a real friendſhip, and from whom he 'had great reaſon to expect a very warm return of 'affection, ſo affected the poor man, that it cauſed 'all thoſe ſymptoms which I have mentioned before. 'Though this incident produced no material con-'ſequence, I could not paſs it over in ſilence, as, of 'all the misfortunes which ever befel him, it affected 'my huſband the moſt. I need not, however, to a 'woman of your delicacy, make any comments on a 'behaviour, which, though I believe it is very com-'mon, is nevertheleſs cruel and baſe beyond deſcrip-'tion; and is diametrically oppoſite to true honour, 'as well as to goodneſs.

'To relieve the uneaſineſs which my huſband felt 'on account of his falſe friend, I prevailed with him 'to go every night almoſt for a fortnight together, 'to the play; a diverſion of which he was greatly 'fond, and from which he did not think his being a 'clergyman excluded him: indeed, it is very well if 'thoſe auſtere perſons who would be inclined to cen-

'ſure him on this head have themſelves no greater 'ſins to anſwer for.'

'From this time, during three months, we paſſed 'our time very agreeably, a little too agreeably per-'haps for our circumſtances: for, however innocent 'diverſions may be in other reſpects, they muſt be owned 'to be expenſive. When you conſider then, madam, 'that our income from the curacy was leſs than forty 'pounds a year, and, that after payment of the debt to 'the rector, and another to my aunt, with the coſts 'in law which ſhe had occaſioned by ſuing for it, 'my legacy was reduced to leſs than ſeventy pounds, 'you will not wonder that in diverſions, clothes, and 'the common expences of life, we had almoſt con-'ſumed our whole ſtock.

'The inconſiderate manner in which we had lived for 'ſome time, will, I doubt not, appear to you to want 'ſome excuſe; but I have none to make for it. Two 'things, however, now happened which occaſioned 'much ſerious reflection to Mr. Bennet; the one was, 'that I grew near my time; the other, that he now 'received a letter from Oxford, demanding the debt 'of forty pounds, which I mentioned to you before. 'The former of theſe he made a pretence of obtain-'ing a delay for the payment of the latter, promiſing 'in two months to pay off half the debt, by which 'means he obtained a forbearance during that time.

'I was now delivered of a ſon, a matter which 'ſhould in reality have encreaſed our concern; but 'on the contrary it gave us great pleaſure; greater 'indeed could not have been conceived at the birth of 'an heir to the moſt plentiful eſtate. So entirely 'thoughtleſs were we, and ſo little forecaſt had we 'of thoſe many evils and diſtreſſes to which we had 'rendered a human creature, and one ſo dear to us, 'liable. The day of a chriſtening is in all families, 'I believe, a day of jubilee and rejoicing; and yet, 'if we conſider the intereſt of that little wretch who 'is the occaſion, how very little reaſon would the 'moſt ſanguine perſons have for their joy.

'But, though our eyes were too weak to look for-'ward for the ſake of our child, we could not be

'blinded to thoſe dangers that immediately threatened 'ourſelves. Mr. Bennet, at the expiration of the two 'months, received a ſecond letter from Oxford, in a 'very peremptory ſtile, and threatening a ſuit with-'out any further delay. This alarmed us in the 'ſtrongeſt manner; and my huſband, to ſecure his 'liberty, was adviſed for a while to ſhelter himſelf in 'the verge of the court.

'And now, madam, I am entering on that ſcene 'which directly leads to all my miſery.'——Here ſhe ſtopped, and wiped her eyes—and then begging Amelia to excuſe her for a few minutes, ran haſtily out of the room, leaving Amelia by herſelf, while ſhe refreſhed her ſpirits with a cordial to enable her to relate what follows in the next chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Further continuation.

MRS Bennet returning into the room, made a ſhort apology for her abſence, and then proceeded in theſe words:

'We now left our lodging, and took a ſecond floor 'in that very houſe where you now are; to which we 'were recommended by the woman where we had 'before lodged: for the miſtreſſes of both houſes were 'acquainted; and, indeed, we had been all at the 'play together. To this new lodging then (ſuch 'was our wretched deſtiny) we immediately repair-'ed, and were received by Mrs. Elliſon (how can I 'bear the ſound of that deteſted name!) with much 'civility; ſhe took care, however, during the firſt 'fortnight of our reſidence, to wait upon us every 'Monday morning for her rent: ſuch being, it ſeems, 'the cuſtom of this place, which, as it was inhabited 'chiefly by perſons in debt, is not the region of cre-'dit.

'My huſband, by the ſingular goodneſs of the 'rector, who greatly compaſſionated his caſe, was 'enabled to continue his curacy, though he could 'only do the duty on Sundays. He was, however, 'ſometimes obliged to furniſh a perſon to officiate at

'his

'his expence; ſo that our income was very ſcanty, 'and the poor little remainder of the legacy being 'almoſt ſpent, we were reduced to ſome difficulties, 'and what was worſe, ſaw ſtill a proſpect of greater 'before our eyes.

'Under theſe circumſtances, how agreeable to poor 'Mr. Bennet muſt have been the behaviour of Mrs. 'Elliſon, who, when he carried her her rent on the 'uſual day, told him, with a benevolent ſmile, that 'he needed not to give himſelf the trouble of ſuch 'exact punctuality. She added, that, if it was at 'any time inconvenient to him, he might pay her 'when he pleaſed. To ſay the truth, ſays ſhe, I 'never was ſo much pleaſed with any lodgers in my 'life.—I am convinced, Mr. Bennet, you are a very 'worthy man, and you are a very happy one too; 'for you have the prettieſt wife, and the prettieſt child 'I ever ſaw.—Theſe, dear madam, were the words ſhe 'was pleaſed to make uſe of; and I am ſure ſhe behaved 'to me with ſuch an appearance of friendſhip and af-'fection, that, as I could not perceive any poſſible 'views of intereſt which ſhe could have in her pro-'feſſions, I eaſily believed them real.

'There lodged in the ſame houſe—O Mrs. Booth! 'the blood runs cold to my heart, and ſhould run 'cold to your's, when I name him:—There lodged 'in the ſame houſe a lord—The lord, indeed, whom I 'have ſince ſeen in your company. This lord, Mrs. 'Elliſon told me, had taken a great fancy to my lit-'tle Charly: fool that I was, and blinded by my own 'paſſion, which made me conceive that an infant, not 'three months old, could be really the object of af-'fection to any beſides a parent; and more eſpecially 'to a gay young fellow! but if, I was ſilly in being 'deceived, how wicked was the wretch who deceived 'me; who uſed ſuch art, and employed ſuch pains— 'ſuch incredible pains, to deceive me? He acted the 'part of a nurſe to my little infant: he danced it, 'he lulled it, he kiſſed it; declared it was the very 'picture of a nephew of his, his favourite ſiſter's 'child; and ſaid ſo many kind and fond things of 'its beauty, that I myſelf, though, I believe, one of

'the tendereſt and fondeſt of mothers, ſcarce carried 'my own ideas of my little darling's perfection be-'yond the compliments which he paid it.

'My lord, however, perhaps from modeſty before 'my face, fell far ſhort of what Mrs. Elliſon reported 'from him. And now, when ſhe found the impreſſion 'which was made on me by theſe means, ſhe took every 'opportunity of inſinuating to me his lordſhip's many 'virtues, his great goodneſs to his ſiſter's children in 'particular; nor did ſhe fail to drop ſome hints, 'which gave me the moſt ſimple and groundleſs 'hopes of ſtrange conſequences from his fondneſs to 'my Charly.

'When by theſe means, which, ſimple as they may 'appear, were, perhaps, the moſt artful, my lord had 'gained ſomething more, I think, than my eſteem, 'he took the ſureſt method to confirm himſelf in my 'affection. This was, by profeſſing the higheſt friend-'ſhip for my huſband: for, as to myſelf, I do aſſure 'you, he never ſhowed me more than common re-'ſpect; and I hope you will believe I ſhould have 'immediately ſtartled and flown off if he had. Poor I 'accounted for all the friendſhip which he expreſſed 'for my huſband, and all the fondneſs which he ſhow-'ed to my boy, from the great prettineſs of the one, 'and the great merit of the other; fooliſhly conceiv-'ing that others ſaw with my eyes, and felt with my 'heart. Little did I dream, that my own unfortunate 'perſon was the fountain of all this lord's goodneſs, 'and was the intended price of it.

'One evening, as I was drinking tea with Mrs. 'Elliſon by my lord's fire (a liberty which ſhe never 'ſcrupled taking when he was gone out) my little 'Charly, now about half a year old, ſitting in her 'lap; my lord, accidentally no doubt, indeed, I then 'thought it ſo, came in. I was confounded, and 'offered to go; but my lord declared, if he diſturbed 'Mrs. Elliſon's company, as he phraſed it, he would 'himſelf leave the room. When I was thus prevail-'ed on to keep my ſeat, my lord immediately took 'my little baby into his lap, and gave it ſome tea 'there, not a little at the expence of his embroidery;

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'for he was very richly dreſſed: indeed, he was a fine 'a figure as, perhaps, ever was ſeen. His behaviour 'on this occaſion gave me many ideas in his favour. I 'thought he diſcovered good ſenſe, good-nature, 'condeſcenſion, and other good qualities, by the 'the fondneſs he ſhowed to my child, and the con-'tempt he ſeemed to expreſs for his finery, which ſo 'greatly became him: for I cannot deny, but that he 'was the handſomeſt and genteeleſt perſon in the 'world; though ſuch conſiderations advanced him 'not a ſtep in my favour.

'My huſband now returned from church (for this 'happened on a Sunday) and was, by my lord's particu-'lar deſire, uſhered into the room. My lord received 'him with the utmoſt politeneſs, and with many profeſ-'ſions of eſteem; which, he ſaid, he had conceived 'from Mrs. Elliſon's repreſentations of his merit. 'He then proceeded to mention the living which 'was detained from my huſband, of which Mrs. El-'liſon had likewiſe informed him; and ſaid, he 'thought it would be no difficult matter to obtain a 'reſtoration of it by the authority of the biſhop, who 'was his particular friend, and to whom he would 'take an immediate opportunity of mentioning it. 'This, atlaſt, he determined to do the very next day; 'when he invited us both to dinner, where we were 'to be acquainted with his lordſhip's ſucceſs.

'My lord now inſiſted on my huſband's ſtaying 'ſupper with him, without taking any notice of me; 'but Mrs. Elliſon declared he ſhould not part man 'and wife; and that ſhe herſelf would ſtay with me. 'The motion was too agreeable to me to be reject-'ed; and, except the little time I retired to put my 'child to bed, we ſpent together the moſt agreeable 'evening imaginable; nor was it, I believe, eaſy to 'decide, whether Mr. Bennet or myſelf were moſt 'delighted with his lordſhip and Mrs. Elliſon; but 'this I aſſure you, the generoſity of the one, and the 'extreme civility and kindneſs of the other, were the 'ſubjects of our converſation all the enſuing night, 'during which we neither of us cloſed our eyes.

'The next day at dinner, my lord acquainted us, 'that he had prevailed with the biſhop to write to 'the clergyman in the country; indeed, he told us, 'that he had engaged the biſhop to be very warm in 'our intereſt, and had not the leaſt doubt of ſucceſs. 'This threw us both into a flow of ſpirits; and in the 'afternoon, Mr. Bennet, at Mrs. Elliſon's requeſt, 'which was ſeconded by his lordſhip, related the 'hiſtory of our lives, from our firſt acquaintance. 'My lord ſeemed much affected with ſome tender 'ſcenes, which, as no man could better feel, ſo none 'could better deſcribe than my huſband. When he 'had finiſhed, my lord begged pardon for mention-'ing an occurrence which gave him ſuch a particular 'concern, as it had diſturbed that delicious ſtate of 'happineſs in which we had lived at our former 'lodging. "It would be ungenerous," ſaid he, "to rejoice at an accident, which, though it brought "me fortunately acquainted with two of the moſt "agreeable people in the world, was yet at the ex-"pence of your mutual felicity. The circumſtance I "mean, is your debt at Oxford; pray how doth that "ſtand? I am reſolved it ſhall never diſturb your hap-"pineſs hereafter."—At theſe words, the tears burſt 'from my poor huſband's eyes; and in an ecſtacy of 'gratitude, he cried out—"Your lordſhip overcomes "me with generoſity. If you go on in this manner, "both my wife's gratitude and mine muſt be bank-"rupt."—He then acquainted my lord with the exact 'ſtate of the caſe, and received aſſurances from him, 'that the debt ſhould never trouble him. My huſband 'was again breaking out into the warmeſt expreſſions 'of gratitude; but my lord ſtopped him ſhort, ſaying, 'if you have any obligation, it is to my little Charly 'here, from whoſe little innocent ſmiles I have receiv-'ed more than the value of this trifling debt in plea-'ſure. I forgot to tell you, that when I offered to leave 'the room after dinner, upon my child's account, my 'lord would not ſuffer me; but ordered the child to 'be brought to me. He now took it out of my arms, 'placed it upon his own knee, and fed it with ſome 'fruit from the deſſert. In ſhort, it would be more

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'tedious to you than to myſelf, to relate the thouſand 'little tenderneſſes he ſhowed to the child. He gave 'it many baubles; among the reſt was a coral, worth at 'leaſt three pounds; and when my huſband was con-'fined near a fortnight to his chamber with a cold, 'he viſited the child every day (for to this infant's 'account were all his viſits placed) and ſeldom fail-'ed of accompanying his viſit with a preſent to the 'little thing.

'Here, Mrs. Booth, I cannot help mentioning a 'doubt which hath often ariſen in my mind, ſince I 'have been enough miſtreſs of myſelf to reflect on 'this horrid train which was laid to blow up my in-'nocence. Wicked and barbarous it was to the 'higheſt degree, without any queſtion; but my doubt 'is, whether the art or folly of it be the more con-'ſpicuous: for, however delicate and refined the art 'muſt be allowed to have been, the folly, I think, 'muſt, upon a fair examination, appear no leſs 'aſtoniſhing: for, to lay all conſiderations of cruelty 'and crime out of the caſe, what a fooliſh bargain 'doth the man make for himſelf, who purchaſes ſo 'poor a pleaſure at ſo high a price!

'We had lived near three weeks with as much free-'dom as if we had been all of the ſame family, when 'one afternoon my lord propoſed to my huſband to 'ride down himſelf to ſolicit the ſurrender: for he 'ſaid the biſhop had received an unſatisfactory anſwer 'from the parſon, and had written a ſecond letter more 'preſſing; which his lordſhip now promiſed us to 'ſtrengthen by one of his own that my huſband was 'to carry with him. Mr. Bennet agreed to this pro-'poſal with great thankfulneſs; and the next day 'was appointed for his journey. The diſtance was 'near ſeventy miles.

'My huſband ſet out on his journey; and he had 'ſcarce left me before Mrs. Elliſon came into my 'room, and endeavoured to comfort me in his ab-'ſence; to ſay the truth, though he was to be from 'me but a few days, and the purpoſe of his going was 'to fix our happineſs on a ſound foundation for all our

'future days, I could ſcarce ſupport my ſpirits under 'this firſt ſeparation. But though I then thought Mrs. 'Elliſon's intentions to be moſt kind and friendly, 'yet the means ſhe uſed were utterly ineffectual, and 'appeared to me injudicious. Inſtead of ſoothing my 'uneaſineſs, which is always the firſt phyſic to be 'given to grief, ſhe rallied me upon it, and began to 'talk in a very unuſual ſtile of gaiety, in which ſhe 'treated conjugal love with much ridicule.

'I gave her to underſtand, that ſhe diſpleaſed me 'by this diſcourſe; but ſhe ſoon found means to give 'ſuch a turn to it, as made a merit of all ſhe had ſaid. 'And now, when ſhe had worked me into a good hu-'mour, ſhe made a propoſal to me, which I at firſt 'rejected; but at laſt fatally—too fatally ſuffered 'myſelf to be over perſuaded. This was, to go to a 'maſquerade at Ranelagh, for which my lord had 'furniſhed her with tickets.

At theſe words Amelia turned pale as death, and haſtily begged her friend to give her a glaſs of water, ſome air, or any thing. Mrs. Bennet having thrown open the window, and procured the water, which prevented Amelia from fainting, looked at her with much tenderneſs, and cried, 'I do not wonder, my dear ma-'dam, that you are affected with my mentioning that 'fatal maſquerade; ſince I firmly believe the ſame 'ruin was intended for you at the ſame place. The 'apprehenſion of which occaſioned the letter I ſent 'you this morning, and all the trial of your patience 'which I have made ſince.'

Amelia gave her a tender embrace, with many expreſſions of the warmeſt gratitude; aſſured her ſhe had pretty well recovered her ſpirits, and begged her to continue her ſtory; which Mrs. Bennet then did. However, as our readers may likewiſe be glad to recover their ſpirits alſo, we ſhall here put an end to this chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The ſtory further continued.

MRS. Bennet proceeded thus:

'I was at length prevailed on to accompany 'Mrs. Elliſon to the maſquerade. Here, I muſt con- 'feſs, the pleaſantneſs of the place, the variety of the 'dreſſes, and the novelty of the thing gave me much 'delight, and raiſed my fancy to the higheſt pitch. 'As I was entirely void of all ſuſpicion, my mind 'threw off all reſerve, and pleaſure only filled my 'thoughts. Innocence, it is true, poſſeſſed my heart; 'but it was innocence unguarded, intoxicated with 'fooliſh deſires, and liable to every temptation. 'During the firſt two hours we had many trifling ad- 'ventures not worth remembering. At length my 'lord joined us, and continued with me all the even- 'ing; and we danced ſeveral dances together.

'I need not, I believe, tell you, madam, how en- 'gaging his converſation is. I wiſh I could with truth 'ſay, I was not pleaſed with it; or, at leaſt, that I 'had a right to be pleaſed with it. But I will diſ- 'guiſe nothing from you: I now began to diſcover 'that he had ſome affection for me; but he had al- 'ready too firm a footing in my eſteem to make the 'diſcovery ſhocking. I will—I will own the truth; 'I was delighted with perceiving a paſſion in him, 'which I was not unwilling to think he had had from 'the beginning, and to derive his having concealed it 'ſo long from his awe of my virtue, and his reſpect 'to my underſtanding. I aſſure you, madam, at the 'ſame time, my intentions were, never to exceed the 'bounds of innocence. I was charmed with the de- 'licacy of his paſſion; and, in the fooliſh, thought- 'leſs turn of mind in which I then was, I fancied I 'might give ſome very diſtant encouragement to ſuch 'a paſſion in ſuch a man, with the utmoſt ſafety; 'that I might indulge my vanity and intereſt at 'once, without being guilty of the leaſt injury.

'I know Mrs. Booth will condemn all theſe thoughts, 'and I condemn them no leſs myſelf; for it is now

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'my ſtedfaſt opinion, that the woman who gives up 'the leaſt outwork of her virtue, doth, in that very 'moment, betray the citadel.

'About two o'clock we returned home, and found 'a very handſome collation provided for us. I was 'aſked to partake of it; and I did not, I could not, 'refuſe. I was not, however, entirely void of all 'ſuſpicion, and I made many reſolutions; one of 'which was, not to drink a drop more than my uſual 'ſtint. This was, at the utmoſt, little more than half 'a pint of ſmall punch.

'I adhered ſtrictly to my quantity; but in the 'quality, I am convinced I was deceived: for, be-'fore I left the room, I found my head giddy. What 'the villain gave me, I know not; but, beſides being 'intoxicated, I perceived effects from it which are 'not to be deſcribed.

'Here, madam, I muſt draw a curtain over the re-'ſidue of that fatal night. Let it ſuffice, that it in-'volved me in the moſt dreadful ruin—a ruin, to 'which, I can truly ſay, I never conſented; and of 'which I was ſcarce conſcious when the villainous 'man avowed it to my face in the morning.

'Thus I have deduced my ſtory to the moſt horrid 'period; happy had I been, had this been the period 'of my life; but I was reſerved for greater miſeries: 'but, before I enter on them, I will mention ſomething 'very remarkable, with which I was now acquainted 'and that will ſhow there was nothing of accident 'which had befallen me; but that all was the effect 'of a long, regular, premeditated deſign.

'You may remember, madam, I told you that we 'were recommended to Mrs. Elliſon by the woman 'at whoſe houſe we had before lodged. This woman, 'it ſeems, was one of my lord's pimps, and had be-'fore introduced me to his lordſhip's notice.

'You are to know then, madam, that this villain, 'this lord, now confeſſed to me, that he had firſt ſeen 'me in the gallery at the oratorio; whither I had gone 'with tickets, with which the woman where I firſt 'lodged had preſented me, and which were, it 'ſeems, purchaſed by my lord. Here I firſt met the

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'vile betrayer, who was diſguiſed in a rug-coat, and 'a patch his face.'

At theſe words, Amelia cried, O gracious Heavens! and fell back in her chair. Mrs. Bennet, with proper applications, brought her back to life; and then Amelia acquainted her, that ſhe herſelf had firſt ſeen the ſame perſon, in the ſame place, and in the ſame diſguiſe. 'O! Mrs. Bennet,' cried ſhe, 'how am I 'indebted to you! What words, what thanks, what 'actions can demonſtrate the gratitude of my ſenti-'ments! I look upon you, and always ſhall look up-'on you, as my preſerver from the brink of a preci-'pice; from which I was falling into the ſame ruin, 'which you have ſo generouſly, ſo kindly, and ſo 'nobly diſcloſed for my ſake.'

Here the two ladies compared notes; and it appeared that his lordſhip's behaviour at the oratorio had been alike to both: that he had made uſe of the very ſame words, the very ſame actions, to Amelia, which he had practiſed over before on poor unfortunate Mrs. Bennet. It may, perhaps, be thought ſtrange, that neither of them could afterwards recollect him: but ſo it was. And, indeed, if we conſider the force of diſguiſe, the very ſhort time that either of them was with him at their firſt interview, and the very little curioſity that muſt have been ſuppoſed in the minds of the ladies, together with the amuſement in which they were then engaged, all wonder will, I apprehend, ceaſe. Amelia, however, now declared, ſhe remembered his voice and features perfectly well; and was thoroughly ſatisfied he was the ſame perſon. She then accounted for his not having viſited in the afternoon, according to his promiſe, from her declared reſolutions to Mrs. Elliſon not to ſee him. She now burſt forth into ſome very ſatirical invectives againſt that lady, and declared ſhe had the art, as well as the wickedneſs, of the devil himſelf.

Many congratulations now paſſed from Mrs. Bennet to Amelia, which were returned with the moſt hearty acknowledgements from that lady. But, inſtead of filling our paper with theſe, we ſhall purſue Mrs. Bennet's

net's ſtory; which ſhe reſumed, as we ſhall find, in the next chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

Further continuation.

'NO ſooner,' ſaid Mrs. Bennet, continuing her ſtory, 'was my lord departed, than Mrs. Elliſon came to me. She behaved in ſuch a manner, when ſhe became acquainted with what had paſſed, that, though I was at firſt ſatisfied of her guilt, ſhe began to ſtagger my opinion; and, at length, prevailed upon me entirely to acquit her. She raved like a madwoman againſt my lord, ſwore he ſhould not ſtay a moment in her houſe, and that ſhe would never ſpeak to him more. In ſhort, had ſhe been the moſt innocent woman in the world, ſhe could not have ſpoke, nor acted any otherwiſe; nor could ſhe have vented more wrath and indignation againſt the betrayer.

'That part of her denunciation of vengeance which concerned my lord's leaving the houſe, ſhe vowed ſhould be executed immediately; but then, ſeeming to recollect herſelf, ſhe ſaid, "Conſider, my dear "child, it is for your ſake alone I ſpeak; will not "ſuch a proceeding give ſome ſuſpicion to your huſ"band?" I anſwered, that I valued not that; that I was reſolved to inform my huſband of all, the moment I ſaw him; with many expreſſions of deteſtation of myſelf, and an indifference for life, and for every thing elſe.

'Mrs. Elliſon, however, found means to ſooth me, and to ſatisfy me with my own innocence; a point, in which, I believe we are all eaſily convinced. In ſhort, I was perſuaded to acquit both myſelf and her, to lay the whole guilt upon my lord, and to reſolve to conceal it from my huſband.

'That whole day I confined myſelf to my chamber, and ſaw no perſon but Mrs. Elliſon. I was, indeed, aſhamed to look any one in the face. Happily for me, my lord went into the country without attempt-

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'ing to come near me; for I believe his ſight would 'have driven me to madneſs.

'The next day, I told Mrs. Elliſon, that I was re-'ſolved to leave her lodgings the moment my lord 'came to town; not on her account (for I really in-'clined to think her innocent;) but on my lord's, 'whoſe face I was reſolved, if poſſible, never more to 'behold. She told me, I had no reaſon to quit her 'houſe on that ſcore; for that my lord himſelf had 'left her lodgings that morning in reſentment, ſhe 'believed, of the abuſes which ſhe had caſt on him the 'day before.

'This confirmed me in the opinion of her inno-'cence; nor hath ſhe from that day to this, till my 'acquaintance with you, madam, done any thing to 'forfeit my opinion. On the contrary, I owe her 'many good offices; amongſt the reſt, I have an an-'nuity of one hundred and fifty pounds a year from 'my lord, which I know was owing to her ſollicita-'tions: for ſhe is not void of generoſity or good-na-'ture; though, by what I have lately ſeen, I am con-'vinced ſhe was the cauſe of my ruin, and hath en-'deavoured to lay the ſame ſnares for you.

'But, to return to my melancholy ſtory. My huſ-'band returned at the appointed time; and I met 'him with an agitation of mind not to be deſcribed. 'Perhaps the fatigue which he had undergone in his 'journey, and his diſſatisfaction at his ill ſucceſs, 'prevented his taking notice of what I feared was too 'viſible. All his hopes were entirely fruſtrated; the 'clergyman had not received the biſhop's letter; and, 'as to my lord's, he treated it with deriſion and con-'tempt. Tired as he was, Mr. Bennet would not ſit 'down till he had enquired for my lord, intending 'to go and pay his compliments. Poor man! he lit-'tle ſuſpected that he had deceived him, as I have 'ſince known, concerning the biſhop; much leſs did 'he ſuſpect any other injury. But the lord—the vil-'lain—was gone out of town, ſo that he was forced to 'poſtpone all his gratitude.

'Mr. Bennet returned to town late on the Saturday 'night, nevertheleſs he performed his duty at church

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'the next day; but I refuſed to go with him. This, 'I think, was the firſt refuſal I was guilty of ſince our 'marriage; but I was become ſo miſerable, that his 'preſence, which had been the ſource of all my happineſs, was become my bane. I will not ſay I hated 'to ſee him; but I can ſay I was aſhamed, indeed 'afraid, to look him in the face. I was conſcious of I 'knew not what.——Guilt, I hope, it cannot be 'called.'

'I hope not, nay, I think not,' cries Amelia.

'My huſband,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'perceived 'my diſſatisfaction, and imputed it to his ill ſucceſs in 'the country. I was pleaſed with this ſelf-deluſion; 'and yet, when I fairly compute the agonies I ſuf-'fered at his endeavours to comfort me on that head, 'I paid moſt ſeverely for it. O, my dear Mrs. Booth, 'happy is the deceived party between true lovers, and 'wretched indeed is the author of the deceit.

'In this wretched condition I paſſed a whole week, 'the moſt miſerable, I think, of my whole life, en-'deavouring to humour my huſband's deluſion, and 'to conceal my own tortures; but I had reaſon to fear 'I could not ſucceed long; for on the Saturday night 'I perceived a viſible alteration in his behaviour to 'me. He went to bed in an apparent ill-humour, 'turned ſullenly from me; and, if I offered at any en-'dearments, he gave me only peeviſh anſwers.

'After a reſtleſs turbulent night, he roſe early on 'Sunday morning, and walked down ſtairs. I ex-'pected his return to breakfaſt, but was ſoon informed 'by the maid that he was gone forth, and that it was 'no more than ſeven o'clock. All this, you may be-'lieve, madam, alarmed me. I ſaw plainly he had 'diſcovered the fatal ſecret, though by what means I 'could not divine. The ſtate of my mind was very 'little ſhort of madneſs. Sometimes I thought of 'running away from my injured huſband, and ſome-'times of putting an end to my life.

'In the midſt of ſuch perturbations, I ſpent the day. 'My huſband returned in the evening.——O Hea-'vens! can I deſcribe what followed?——It is im-'poſſible, I ſhall ſink under the relation.——He

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'entered the room, with a face as white as a ſheet, 'his lips trembling, and his eyes red as coals of fire, 'and ſtarting as it were from his head.—"Molly," 'cries he, throwing himſelf into his chair, "are you "well?"——Good Heavens,' ſays I, 'what's the 'matter?—Indeed, I cannot ſay I am well.'—"No!" 'ſays he—ſtarting from his chair, "falſe monſter, "you have betrayed me, deſtroyed me, you have "ruined your huſband." Then, looking like a fury, 'he ſnatched off a large book from the table, and with 'the malice of a madman threw it at my head, and 'knocked me down backwards. He then caught me 'up in his arms, and kiſſed me with the moſt extra-'vagant tenderneſs; then looking me ſtedfaſtly in the 'face for ſeveral moments, the tears guſhed in a tor-'rent from his eyes, and with his utmoſt violence he 'threw me again on the floor.—Kicked me, ſtamped 'upon me. I believe, indeed, his intent was to kill me, 'and I believe he thought he had accompliſhed it.

'I lay on the ground for ſome minutes, I believe, 'deprived of my ſenſes. When I recovered myſelf, I 'found my huſband lying by my ſide on his face, and 'the blood running from him. It ſeems, when he 'thought he had diſpatched me, he ran his head with 'all his force againſt a cheſt of drawers which ſtood 'in the room, and gave himſelf a dreadful wound in 'his head.

'I can truly ſay, I felt not the leaſt reſentment for 'the uſage I had received: I thought I deſerved it 'all; though, indeed, I little gueſſed what he had 'ſuffered from me. I now uſed the moſt earneſt en-'treaties to him to compoſe himſelf; and endea-'voured with my feeble arms to raiſe him from the 'ground. At length, he ſpoke from me, and ſpring-'ing from the ground, flung himſelf into a chair, 'when looking wildly at me, he cried—"Go from "me, Molly. I beſeech you leave me, I would not "kill you."—He then diſcovered to me—O, Mrs. 'Booth, can you not gueſs it?—I was indeed polluted 'by the villain—I had infected my huſband—O Hea-'vens! why do I live to relate any thing ſo horrid—

'I will

'I will not, I cannot yet ſurvive it. I cannot forgive 'myſelf. Heaven cannot forgive me.'——

Here ſhe became inarticulate with the violence of her grief, and fell preſently into ſuch agonies, that the frighted Amelia began to call aloud for ſome aſſiſtance. Upon this, a maid-ſervant came up, who, ſeeing her miſtreſs in a violent convulſion fit, preſently ſcreamed out ſhe was dead. Upon which one of the other ſex made his appearance; and who ſhould this be but the honeſt ſerjeant? whoſe countenance ſoon made it evident, that though a ſoldier, and a brave one too, he was not the leaſt concerned of all the company on this occaſion.

The reader, if he hath been acquainted with ſcenes of this kind, very well knows that Mrs. Bennet, in the uſual time, returned again to the poſſeſſion of her voice; the firſt uſe of which ſhe made, was to expreſs her aſtoniſhment at the preſence of the ſerjeant, and, with a frantic air, to enquire who he was.

The maid concluding that her miſtreſs was not yet returned to her ſenſes, anſwered, 'Why 'tis my maſ-'ter, madam. Heaven preſerve your ſenſes, madam '—Lord, ſir, my miſtreſs muſt be very bad not to 'know you.'

What Atkinſon thought at this inſtant, I will not ſay; but certain it is, he looked not over wiſe. He attempted twice to take hold of Mrs. Bennet's hand, but ſhe withdrew it haſtily, and preſently after, riſing up from her chair, ſhe declared herſelf pretty well again, and deſired Atkinſon and the maid to withdraw. Both of whom preſently obeyed; the ſerjeant appearing by his countenance to want comfort almoſt as much as the lady did to whoſe aſſiſtance he had been ſummoned.

It is a good maxim to truſt a perſon entirely or not at all: for a ſecret is often innocently blabbed out by thoſe who know but half of it. Certain it is that the maid's ſpeech communicated a ſuſpicion to the mind of Amelia, which the behaviour of the ſerjeant did not tend to remove; what that is, the ſagacious readers may likewiſe probably ſuggeſt to themſelves; if not, they

they must wait our time for disclosing it. We shall now resume the history of Mrs. Bennet, who, after many apologies, proceeded to the matters in the next chapter.

CHAP. IX.

The conclusion of Mrs. Bennet's *history.*

'WHEN I became sensible,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'of the injury I had done my husband, I threw myself at his feet, and embracing his knees, while I bathed them with my tears, I begged a patient hearing, declaring, if he was not satisfied with what I should say, I would become a willing victim of his resentment. I said, and I said truly, that if I owed my death that instant to his hands, I should have no other terror, but of the fatal consequence which it might produce to himself.

'He seemed a little pacified, and bid me say whatever I pleased.

'I then gave him a faithful relation of all that had happened. He heard me with great attention, and, at the conclusion, cried, with a deep sigh—"O "Molly, I believe it all.——You must have been betrayed as you tell me; you could not be guilty of "such baseness, such cruelty, such ingratitude."—He then——O it is impossible to describe his behaviour—he expressed such kindness, such tenderness, such concern, for the manner in which he had used me——I cannot dwell on this scene——I shall relapse——You must excuse me.'

Amelia begged her to omit any thing which so affected her; and she proceeded thus:

'My husband, who was more convinced than I was of Mrs. Ellison's guilt, declared he would not sleep that night in her house. He then went out to see for a lodging; he gave me all the money he had, and left me to pay her bill, and put up the clothes, telling me, if I had not money enough, I might leave the clothes as a pledge: but he vowed he could not answer for himself, if he saw the face of Mrs. Ellison.

'Words

'Words can ſcarce expreſs the behaviour of that 'artful woman, it was ſo kind and ſo generous. She 'ſaid ſhe did not blame my huſband's reſentment, 'nor could ſhe expect any other, but that he and all 'the world ſhould cenſure her—That ſhe hated her 'houſe almoſt as much we did, and deteſted her 'couſin, if poſſible more. In fine, ſhe ſaid, that I 'might leave my clothes there that evening; but that 'ſhe would ſend them to us the next morning. That 'ſhe ſcorned the thought of detaining them; and as 'for the paultery debt, we might pay her whenever 'we pleaſed: for, to do her juſtice, with all her vices, 'ſhe hath ſome good in her.'

'Some good in her, indeed!' cried Amelia, with great indignation.

'We were ſcarce ſettled in our new lodgings,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'when my huſband began to 'complain of a pain in his inſide. He told me, he 'feared he had done himſelf ſome injury in his rage, 'and had burſt ſomething within him. As to the 'odious—I cannot bear the thought, the great ſkill of 'his ſurgeon ſoon entirely cured him; but his other 'complaint, inſtead of yielding to any application, 'grew ſtill worſe and worſe, nor ever ended till it 'brought him to his grave.

'O Mrs. Booth, could I have been certain that I 'had occaſioned this, however innocently I had oc-'caſioned it, I could never have ſurvived it; but the 'ſurgeon who opened him after his death, aſſured 'me, that he died of what they called a polypus in 'his heart, and that nothing which had happened 'on account of me was in the leaſt the occaſion of 'it.

'I have, however, related the affair truly to you. 'The firſt complaint I ever heard of the kind was 'within a day or two after we left Mrs. Elliſon's; and 'this complaint remained till his death, which might 'induce him perhaps to attribute his death to another 'cauſe; but the ſurgeon, who is a man of the higheſt 'eminence, hath always declared the contrary to me, 'with the moſt poſitive certainty; and this opinion 'hath been my only comfort.

'When

'When my husband died, which was about ten 'weeks after we quitted Mrs. Ellison's, of whom I 'had then a different opinion from what I have now, I 'was left in the most wretched condition imaginable. 'I believe, madam, she showed you my letter In-'deed she did every thing for me at that time, which 'I could have expected from the best of friends. She 'supplied me with money from her own pocket, by 'which means I was preserved from a distress in which 'I must otherwise inevitably have perished.

'Her kindness to me in this season of distress pre-'vailed on me to return again to her house. Why, 'indeed, should I have refused an offer so very con-'venient for me to accept, and which seemed so ge-'nerous in her to make! Here I lived a very retired 'life, with my little babe, seeing no company but 'Mrs. Ellison herself for a full quarter of a year. 'At last Mrs. Ellison brought me a parchment from 'my lord, in which he had settled upon me, at her 'instance, as she told me, and as I believe it was, 'an annuity of one hundred and fifty pounds a-year. 'This was, I think, the very first time she had men-'tioned his hateful name to me since my return to 'her house. And she now prevailed upon me, though, 'I assure you, not without much difficulty, to suffer 'him to execute the deed in my presence.

'I will not describe our interview—I am not able 'to describe it, and I have often wondered how I 'found spirits to support it. This I will say for him, 'that, if he was not a real penitent, no man alive 'could act the part better.

'Beside resentment, I had another motive for my 'backwardness to agree to such a meeting; and this 'was fear. I apprehended, and surely not without 'reason, that the annuity was rather meant as a bribe 'than a recompense, and that farther designs were 'laid against my innocence: but in this I found my-'self happily deceived; for neither then, nor at any 'time since, have I ever had the least solicitation of that 'kind. Nor, indeed, have I seen the least occasion 'to think my lord had any such desires.

'Good

'Good Heavens! what are theſe men! what is this 'appetite which muſt have novelty and reſiſtance for 'its provocatives; and which is delighted with us no 'longer than while we may be conſidered in the light 'of enemies.'

'I thank you, madam,' cries Amelia, 'for reliev-'ing me from my fears on your account: I trembled 'at the conſequence of this ſecond acquaintance with 'ſuch a man, in ſuch a ſituation.'

'I aſſure you, madam, I was in no danger,' returned Mrs. Bennet: 'For, beſides that I think I could 'have pretty well relied on my own reſolution, I have 'heard ſince, at St. Edmundſbury, from an intimate 'acquaintance of my lord's, who was an entire 'ſtranger to my affairs, that the higheſt degree of in-'conſtancy is his character; and that few of his num-'berleſs miſtreſſes have ever received a ſecond viſit 'from him.

'Well, madam,' continued ſhe, 'I think I have 'little more to trouble you with; unleſs I ſhould re-'late to you, my long ill ſtate of health; from which 'I am lately, I thank Heaven, recovered: or, unleſs 'I ſhould mention to you the moſt grievous accident 'that ever befel me, the loſs of my poor dear Charly.' —Here ſhe made a full ſtop, and the tears ran down into her boſom.

Amelia was ſilent a few minutes, while ſhe gave the lady time to vent her paſſion; after which, ſhe began to pour forth a vaſt profuſion of acknowledge-ments for the trouble ſhe had taken in relating her hiſtory; but chiefly for the motive which had induced her to it; and for the kind warning which ſhe had given her by the little note which Mrs. Bennet had ſent her that morning.

'Yes, madam,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'I am con-'vinced by what I have lately ſeen that you are the 'deſtined ſacrifice to this wicked lord; and that Mrs. 'Elliſon, whom I no longer doubt to have been the 'inſtrument of my ruin, intended to betray you in the 'ſame manner. The day I met my lord in your 'apartment, I began to entertain ſome ſuſpicions, and

'I took

'I took Mrs. Ellison very roundly to task upon them: 'her behaviour, notwithstanding many asseverations 'to the contrary, convinced me I was right; and I 'intended, more than once, to speak to you, but 'could not; till last night the mention of the mas- 'querade determined me to delay it no longer. I 'therefore sent you that note this morning; and am 'glad you so luckily discovered the writer, as it hath 'given me this opportunity of easing my mind; and 'of honestly showing you, how unworthy I am of 'your friendship, at the same time that I so earnestly 'desire it.'

CHAP. X.

Being the last chapter of the seventh book.

AMELIA did not fail to make proper compliments to Mrs. Bennet, on the conclusion of her speech in the last chapter. She told her, that, from the first moment of her acquaintance, she had the strongest inclination to her friendship; and that her desires of that kind were much increased by hearing her story. 'Indeed, madam,' says she, 'you are 'much too severe a judge on yourself: for they must 'have very little candour, in my opinion, who look 'upon your case with any severe eye. To me, I as- 'sure you, you appear highly the object of compas- 'sion; and I shall always esteem you, as an innocent 'and an unfortunate woman.'

Amelia would then have taken her leave; but Mrs. Bennet so strongly pressed her to stay to breakfast, that at length she complied: indeed, she had fasted so long, and her gentle spirits had been so agitated with variety of passions, that nature very strongly seconded Mrs. Bennet's motion.

Whilst the maid was preparing the tea-equipage, Amelia, with a little slyness in her countenance, asked Mrs Bennet, if Serjeant Atkinson did not lodge in the same house with her. The other reddened so extremely at the question, repeated the serjeant's name with such hesitation, and behaved so awkwardly, that Amelia wanted no further confirmation of her suspi-

cions. She would not, however, declare them abruptly to the other; but began a diſſertation on the ſerjeant's virtues: and, after obſerving the great concern which he had manifeſted when Mrs. Bennet was in her fit, concluded with ſaying, ſhe believed the ſerjeant would make the beſt huſband in the world; for that he had great tenderneſs of heart, and a gentleneſs of manners, not often to be found in any man; and much ſeldomer in perſons of his rank.

'And why not in his rank?' ſaid Mrs. Bennet. 'Indeed, Mrs. Booth, we rob the lower order of mankind of their due. I do not deny the force and power 'of education; but when we conſider how very injudicious is the education of the better ſort in general, 'how little they are inſtructed in the practice of virtue, we ſhall not expect to find the heart much improved by it. And even as to the head, how very 'ſlightly do we commonly find it improved by what 'is called a genteel education! I have myſelf I think 'ſeen inſtances of as great goodneſs, and as great 'underſtanding too, among the lower ſort of people, 'as among the higher. Let us compare your ſerjeant, 'now, with the lord who hath been the ſubject of converſation, on which ſide would an impartial judge 'decide the balance to incline?'

'How monſtrous then,' cries Amelia, 'is the opinion of thoſe, who conſider our matching ourſelves 'the leaſt below us in degree as a kind of contamination!'

'A moſt abſurd and prepoſterous ſentiment,' anſwered Mrs. Bennet warmly; 'how abhorrent from 'juſtice, from common ſenſe, and from humanity—'but how extremely incongruous with a religion, 'which profeſſes to know no difference of degree; 'but ranks all mankind on the footing of brethren! 'Of all kinds of pride, there is none ſo unchriſtian as 'that of ſtation; in reality, there is none ſo contemptible. Contempt, indeed, may be ſaid to be its 'own object; for my own part, I know none ſo deſpicable as thoſe who deſpiſe others.'

'I do aſſure you,' ſaid Amelia, 'you ſpeak my 'own ſentiments. I give you my word, I ſhould not

'be aſhamed of being the wife of an honeſt man in 'any ſtation.—Nor, if it had been much higher than I 'was, ſhould I have thought myſelf degraded, by cal-'ling our honeſt ſerjeant my huſband.'

'Since you have made this declaration,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'I am ſure you will not be offended at a ſe-'cret I am going to mention to you.'——

'Indeed, my dear,' anſwered Amelia ſmiling, 'I 'wonder rather you have concealed it ſo long; eſpe-'cially, after the many hints I have given you.'

'Nay, pardon me, madam,' replied the other, 'I 'do not remember any ſuch hints; and, perhaps, you 'do not even gueſs what I am going to ſay. My 'ſecret is this—that no woman ever had ſo ſincere, 'ſo paſſionate a lover, as you have had in the ſer-'jeant.'

'I a lover in the ſerjeant! I!' cries Amelia, a little ſurpriſed.

'Have patience,' anſwered the other:—'I ſay, 'you, my dear. As much ſurpriſed as you appear, I 'tell you no more than the truth; and yet it is a truth 'you could hardly expect to hear from me, eſpecially 'with ſo much good humour; ſince I will honeſtly 'confeſs to you—But, what need have I to confeſs, 'what I know you gueſs already?—Tell me, now, 'ſincerely, don't you gueſs?—

'I gueſs, indeed, and hope,' ſaid ſhe, 'that he is 'your huſband.'

'He is, indeed, my huſband,' cries the other, 'and 'I am moſt happy in your approbation. In honeſt 'truth, you ought to approve my choice; ſince you 'was every way the occaſion of my making it. What 'you ſaid of him very greatly recommended him to 'my opinion; but he endeared himſelf to me moſt, 'by what he ſaid of you. In ſhort, I have diſco-'vered, that he hath always loved you, with ſuch a 'faithful, honeſt, noble, generous paſſion, that I was 'conſequently convinced his mind muſt poſſeſs all the 'ingredients of ſuch a paſſion; and what are theſe, 'but true honour, goodneſs, modeſty, bravery, ten-'derneſs, and, in a word, every human virtue.—For-

'give

'give me, my dear; but I was uneaſy till I became 'myſelf the object of ſuch a paſſion.'

'And do you really think,' ſaid Amelia ſmiling, 'that I ſhall forgive you robbing me of ſuch a 'lover? or, ſuppoſing what you banter me with, 'was true, do you really imagine you could change 'ſuch a paſſion?'

'No, my dear,' anſwered the other, 'I only hope I 'have changed the object: for be aſſured there is no 'greater vulgar error, than that it is impoſſible for a 'man who loves one woman ever to love another. 'On the contrary, it is certain, that a man who can 'love one woman ſo well at a diſtance, will love an-'other better that is nearer to him. Indeed, I have 'heard one of the beſt huſbands in the world declare, 'in the preſence of his wife, that he had always loved 'a princeſs with adoration. Theſe paſſions, which 'reſide only in very amorous and very delicate minds, 'feed only on the delicacies there growing; and 'leave all the ſubſtantial food, and enough of the 'delicacy too, for the wife.'

The tea being now ready, Mrs. Bennet, or, if you pleaſe, for the future, Mrs. Atkinſon, propoſed to call in her huſband; but Amelia objected. She ſaid, ſhe ſhould be glad to ſee him any other time; but was then in the utmoſt hurry, as ſhe had been three hours abſent from all ſhe moſt loved. However, ſhe had ſcarce drunk a diſh of tea before ſhe changed her mind; and, ſaving ſhe would not part man and wife, deſired Mr. Atkinſon might appear.

The maid anſwered, that her maſter was not at home; which words ſhe had ſcarce ſpoken, when he knocked haſtily at the door; and immediately came running into the room, all pale and breathleſs; and, addreſſing himſelf to Amelia, cried out, 'I am ſorry, 'my dear lady, to bring you ill news; but Captain 'Booth'—'What! what!' cries Amelia, dropping the tea-cup from her hand, 'is any thing the matter 'with him!'—'Don't be frightened, my dear lady,' ſaid the ſerjeant—'He is in very good health; but a 'misfortune hath happened.'—'Are my children

'well?' ſaid Amelia.—'O, very well,' anſwered the ſerjeant.—'Pray, madam, don't be frightened; I hope 'it will ſignify nothing—he is arreſted—but I hope 'to get him out of their damned hands immediately,' 'Where is he,' cries Amelia, 'I will go to him this 'inſtant!'—'He begs you will not,' anſwered the ſerjeant. 'I have ſent his lawyer to him, and am going 'back with Mrs. Elliſon this moment; but I beg 'your ladyſhip, for his ſake, and for your own ſake, 'not to go.'—'Mrs. Elliſon! what is Mrs. Elliſon 'to do?' cries Amelia,—'I muſt and will go.' Mrs. Atkinſon then interpoſed, and begged that ſhe would not hurry her ſpirits; but compoſe herſelf, and go home to her children; whither ſhe would attend her. She comforted her with the thoughts, that the captain was in no immediate danger, that ſhe could go to him when ſhe would; and deſired her to let the ſerjeant return with Mrs. Elliſon; ſaying, ſhe might be of ſervice; and that there was much wiſdom, and no kind of ſhame, in making uſe of bad people on certain occaſions.

'And who,' cries Amelia, a little come to herſelf, 'hath done this barbarous action?'

'One I am aſhamed to name,' cries the ſerjeant; 'indeed, I had always a very different opinion of him; 'I could not have believed any thing but my own 'ears and eyes; but Dr. Harriſon is the man who 'hath done the deed.'

'Dr. Harriſon!' cries Amelia.—'Well then, there 'is an end of all goodneſs in the world. I will never 'have a good opinion of any human being more.'

The ſerjeant begged that he might not be detained from the captain; and that if Amelia pleaſed to go home, he would wait upon her. But ſhe did not chuſe to ſee Mrs. Elliſon at this time; and after a little conſideration, ſhe reſolved to ſtay where ſhe was; and Mrs. Atkinſon agreed to go and fetch her children to her, it being not many doors diſtant.

The ſerjeant then departed; Amelia, in her confuſion, never having once thonght of wiſhing him joy on his marriage.

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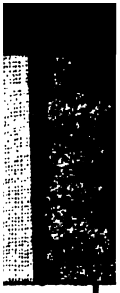

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